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MODERN SCANDINAVIAN LITERATURE

HANNA ASTRUP LARSEN

When Ibsen, laden with foreign honors, came back to Norway to spend his declining years in his homeland, he received an invitation which must have made him feel that he was again among his own people, who assuredly were never respecters of persons. The invitation was in the form of complimentary tickets to two lectures by a young author named Knut Hamsun.

Hamsun announced that his object was to show the limitations of the great authors, Ibsen, Björnson, and their contemporaries who had made Norway's fame shine before the world; and he went on to expound how the literature they had created was heavy-handed, utilitarian, childishly naïve, "leaving great territories of the human soul unexplored." He carried out his program with gay courage, although Ibsen sat in a front seat boring his eyes into the speaker. Ibsen's biographer, Professor Halvdan Koht, suggests that when the venerable dramatist could take the onslaughts of the young upstart so calmly—even with a twinkle in his eye—it was because he had already abandoned the social drama and entered upon the last stage of his authorship, the symbolic drama, in which the only object is to search out the most secret recesses of the human soul.

Certainly, Northern literature was entering upon a new phase.

Knut Hamsun had become famous overnight with his first serious book, *Hunger* (1890). It described the sufferings of a young writer who went about in Christiania unable to find work or to interest editors in his writings. An author of the preceding decade would have made the book an arraignment of that society which had no place for a young man "with the best brains in the country and

shoulders that could stop a truck," to quote Hamsun's characterization of his alter ego. But Hamsun is not interested in social justice. What he essays to do is to trace the dissolution of the young man himself under the influence of hunger, the effect upon his body, his mind, and his nerves to their finest filaments. He chronicles the strange freakish impulses and hallucinations that grip his hero. It is an art more akin to the Russian than to that of Western Europe.

The same type as the hero of *Hunger* reappears in many of Hamsun's books. He is the "Wanderer," the stranger, who is always an outsider from the common life, not because he wants to be, but because his nerves and senses are differently attuned from those of the common citizen. We meet him as Nagel in *Mysteries,* as Lieutenant Glahn in *Pan* and, softened by age, in *Wanderers.*

But Hamsun, though for many years he led a foot-loose existence, had in him the blood of land-owning peasants with a nine-hundred-year-old lineage, and as he grew older, the longing to strike roots in the soil gained the ascendance over his wandering proclivities. It was while developing a farm he had acquired in Northern Norway that he conceived and wrote *The Growth of the Soil,* the greatest work of his later years and perhaps the most sublime apotheosis of husbandry in any modern literature.

Through all Hamsun's books there runs a red thread that unites the "Wanderer" with the farmer, the vagabond of his early books with the citizen of the later. This is his passionate love of nature and his fervent faith in nature's potency to make human beings happy.

In Sweden the neo-Romantic movement was launched a year or two before Hamsun made his rebellious entry in Norway, and in Sweden the movement was given force and direction by a group of young geniuses the like of which the country has never known in modern times. Besides the leader, Verner von Heidenstam, there was Selma Lagerlöf, and the two greatest lyrists of modern Sweden, Gustaf Fröding (died 1911) and Erik Axel Karlfeldt (died 1931). Fröding's intensely human and passionate verse, the expression of a lacerated soul, has found a limited audience outside of Sweden, but Karlfeldt's finely-wrought poems remain almost exclusively the

treasure of his countrymen. Karlfeldt's name is, however, known to American readers because he was for many years secretary of the Swedish Academy which awards the Nobel Prize in Literature, and the dispatch now comes from Sweden that the Academy has taken the unprecedented step of awarding him posthumously the prize which he refused in his lifetime. His successor as secretary of the Academy is the distinguished essayist, dramatist, and short-story writer, Per Hallström, who is also counted among the neo-Romantic writers usually known in Sweden as the Poets of the Nineties.

The leader of the group, Verner von Heidenstam, was a young nobleman of ancient lineage, who had just returned from years of travel in the Latin countries and the Orient. As Hamsun attacked Ibsen, so Heidenstam attacked Strindberg, whose naturalistic dramas were then in vogue. He vindicated the ancient mission of the poet to inspire and uplift and to give pleasure, and his own first volume of poems from the Orient was a brilliant illustration of his theory. Differing from his Norwegian contemporary, Hamsun, in every other way, Heidenstam resembled him in making the individual human being the end and aim of literature; but while Hamsun interests himself in very lowly persons, Heidenstam is fascinated by contemplation of the leaders of men. He sees the great man or woman as the highest flaming point of the common mass, worshipped by others as the expression of what is highest in themselves. From this point of view he has written his most popular work, *The Charles Men,* a two-volume collection of short stories grouped around Charles XII, and in a similar austere mood he has framed the two-volume novel *The Folkung Tree* in which he carries Sweden's history back to misty antiquity.

Heidenstam, I venture to say, is the greatest living author in the Scandinavian North and is so regarded in his homeland. Unfortunately he has not won the recognition he deserves in this country. Possibly he is too Swedish in his genius, possibly his lofty and somewhat cold ideal does not appeal to our minds bent on more practical ends. Nevertheless, those who seek greatness rather than slippered ease in literature should not neglect Heidenstam.

Far greater fame abroad has been accorded to his contemporary

Selma Lagerlöf. A year older than Heidenstam, but without his experience of the world, she was a timid home-bred girl when his precept and example gave her courage to write as she felt: romantically, and the world is infinitely richer because she ventured to be herself in a realistic age. Selma Lagerlöf is also strongly bound to her Swedish background, but she has the gift of drawing all the world into her intimate circle where she delights them with her humor and warms them with the goodness of her heart. The romantic figures of old Vermland, her native province, are known to all who have read her first book, *The Saga of Gösta Berling*. Indeed her background has become so familiar that the villages, churches, and estates surrounding the "long Lake Löwen" are as often called by the names given them in her stories as by those they bear on the map. "Gösta Berling's country" has become one of the chief tourist routes of Sweden.

The Lövdala Manor mentioned in *Liljecrona's Home, The Emperor of Portugallia,* and other books with a Vermland background is her own childhood home, Mårbacka, and a few years ago she raised a charming memorial to it in the book about her own family and childhood entitled *Mårbacka*. In other books, notably her great novel *Jerusalem* with the scene laid in Dalecarlia, she has shown that she has as keen and sympathetic an insight into the hearts of the peasants as those of her "cavaliers" and ladies. But in recent years the homing instinct which is so strong in the Northern races has reasserted itself, and Miss Lagerlöf has bought back her childhood home, where she now lives and writes. Her last book, the triple novel *The Ring of the Löwensköld*s, goes back to the scenes of *Gösta Berling* and recaptures some of the fresh charm of her first book.

The neo-Romantic movement, whose three great names are Hamsun, Heidenstam, and Selma Lagerlöf, now all past three score and ten, had its representatives also in Denmark, but as these were chiefly lyric poets their works are, unfortunately, not available in English.[1]

[1] A few have been rendered into English by Robert Hillyer and Foster Damon and may be found in *A Book of Danish Verse* published by the American-Scandinavian Foundation. The Foundation has also put out an *Anthology of Swedish Lyrics* trans-

Among those who belong exclusively to the present century we find many capable writers and a few great ones. They stand out rather as individuals than as schools, but one general tendency may be noted: a determination to get close to the soil. The *Heimath* literature is especially strong in Norway, where the vast extent of the country and the many criss-crossing mountain ranges foster small isolated communities. An intense local feeling is evident even in an author of international fame such as Hamsun. *Pan, Victoria, Benoni, Rosa, Children of the Age,* and *Segelfoss Town* all have their background in Nordland, the northern part of Norway, which Hamsun learned to know as a herdsboy and a young laborer. The glamour of the nightless summers rests over them, and the quaint village life which has the local store and trading magnate for its central pivot, is typical of Nordland and of no other region in Norway.

Among genuine writers of the soil first place is in Norway accorded to Olav Duun, whose greatest work, *The People of Juvik,* written in a peasant dialect, describes the life of several generations on one of the big farms in central Norway. Duun knows these inarticulate people, who are as different from Hamsun's volatile fisherfolk as if they belonged to another hemisphere. He makes us understand the atavistic instincts that link them with remote heathen times, but in the last of the race, the brilliant and lovable Odin, the old die-hard paganism is conquered and Christian ideals win out, as Odin gives his life for his enemy. Three books in this great six-volume epic have appeared in English under the titles *The Trough of the Wave, The Blind Man,* and *The Big Wedding.*

A very capable and prolific writer is Peter Egge, whose masterpiece, *Hansine Solstad,* has been translated. Duun, Egge, and Bojer are all natives of the region around Trondhjem, the center and heart of Norway, famous of old for its strong but hard and stiff-necked people.

Johan Bojer has gone far afield for his subjects. Some of his novels, like *A Pilgrimage* and *The Prisoner Who Sang,* are drama-

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lated by Charles Wharton Stork, and three volumes of *Best Stories,* of Norway, Denmark, and Sweden edited by Hanna Astrup Larsen. These volumes contain selections from the works of many authors not otherwise represented in English.

tized ideas rather than living people, and the author has cleverly heightened the effect he wished to produce by almost eliminating the background, so that we see his figures like the actors of a drama that is staged with no scenery except full, dark curtains. It may be that this absence of local color contributed to the ease with which Bojer won popularity abroad, but his own people reserved their heartiest acclaim for the books in which a more definite locale helped to create an illusion of richer, warmer humanity. In *The Last of the Vikings* he dealt with scenes and events beloved by Norwegians—the great winter fisheries in northern waters where as many as twenty thousand men take part, and where Bojer himself plied an oar as a half-grown lad. As a pendant though not a sequel to this, Bojer has written *The Everlasting Struggle*. The hero of the first book is Kristaver, the bold fisherman, a modern viking in whom the romance and heroism of the fisheries is embodied. The main character in the other is Lisbeth, the patient toiling mother of the poor, and the story is merely the endless, hopeless fight against poverty, which would be unutterably dreary but for the buoyant spirit in which it is carried on. These two books represent the highest level in Bojer's purely realistic novels.

Of less artistic merit, but interesting for its thesis is *The New Temple*. In his most famous book, *The Great Hunger,* the author preached a religion of humanity. The "great hunger" in Per Holm's soul is not stilled until he has lost all that makes life worth living and has conquered himself in doing good to his enemy. It is a Christian experience, but free from all dogma; in fact Per Holm turns his back on organized religion. In *The New Temple* Per Holm's son becomes a minister in the Established Church, not because he accepts all its tenets, but because he believes that human beings need a "temple," a spiritual dwelling-place hallowed by the experiences of their forebears.

One may question the surviving power of Bojer's national religion as expounded in *The New Temple,* but there can be no doubt of the impassioned driving force of the religious impulse in Sigrid Undset's work. There it sits at the heart and center, more and more dominating all that she writes. It was present in *Kristin Lavransdatter,* the remarkable trilogy which tells the story of a woman's

life as daughter, mistress, wife, and mother, its poignancy heightened by the stark medieval background. At first the love element and the picture of family life hold the chief interest, but as the story proceeds, the religious theme gathers momentum, and at the end a curtain seems to be drawn aside so that we see all the powers of heaven and hell battling for human souls. We feel in this author a kinship with the medieval "vision" poems that seek to penetrate behind the veil even of death.

Her next work was a tetralogy, also with a medieval background, *The Master of Hestviken.* Here the love element is entirely subordinated to the main theme, Olav Audunssön's remorse for an unconfessed crime which poisons his whole life. The weak point in the story is that it is not the sin itself—killing the seducer of his promised wife—that is the corroding influence, but the fact that he has never confessed it to the priest and done penance. He is deterred by consideration for others, first for the frail woman whom he still loves, and afterwards for her son, whom he adopts as his own. But this is the root of all Olav's trouble, according to the author—that he does what seems to him best instead of what is God's will.

In Olav's adopted son Eirik she shows the positive side of her religious faith. Inheriting weakness from both his father and his mother, unloved by his foster-father, driven out by the conditions of his home into a dissolute life, he nevertheless sloughs off his unlovely characteristics and rises to moral heights of which he would have seemed incapable. This transformation is brought about by Eirik's submission to the Church, and is contrasted with the dissolution wrought in the originally noble character of Olav. Spiritual force triumphs over the laws of heredity and environment.

Sigrid Undset shrinks from no portrayal of human life: the agonies of birth and death, the joy of conception, the bliss of parenthood, these simple elemental things that underlie all human existence are what interests her, and she depicts them with a courage, almost a ruthlessness, unequaled even in the Scandinavian North whose writers do not usually gloss over the realities. It seemed to many of her admirers that in the Middle Ages, with their bolder, franker attitude toward life, she had found the medium best suited to enhance her powers. She herself has declared, however, that for

the present she is done with medieval subjects, and her last two books mark a return to the scene of her earliest stories, modern Oslo. But she brings to her interpretation of modern issues the same spirit that animated *Kristin Lavransdatter.* Paul Selmer, the hero of *The Wild Orchid,* is the child of divorced parents and suffers from that dislocation of the natural family relations which is an inevitable result of divorce. All through this book Paul is groping his way toward a more satisfying principle of life than that in which he has been brought up, and in the sequel, *The Burning Bush,* he comes to rest upon a religious faith which enables him to bear a heavy burden of disappointment without flinching. Unlike his mother, he does not throw off the yoke that galls him. It is Sigrid Undset's great distinction that she makes us see spiritual experiences as life's high adventure, but these experiences are nearly always interwoven with the simple, everyday home life which she pictures in a singularly appealing and intimate manner.

In Denmark the twentieth-century tendency to get close to the soil has found its exponents in the Jutland school. This group appeared as a reaction and a protest against the brilliant and sophisticated Copenhagen writers—among whom J. P. Jacobsen and Herman Bang were the best-known—who were directly influenced by Georg Brandes and by the new ideas of the late nineteenth century. The Jutlanders weave their stories of homespun yarn. Their tales of the farmers and fisherfolk of western Denmark convey a strong sense of sincerity and genuineness, but it may be doubted whether they have the universal appeal which will win them a foreign audience. Among the best are Marie Bregendahl and Harry Söiberg. The former pictures life on the big Jutland farmsteads as it is lived today and has been lived much in the same manner for centuries. Her novel *A Night of Death* has recently been translated. Harry Söiberg has taken for his special province a small strip of coast by the Western Sea, where formerly the inhabitants subsisted mainly on stranded ships that were wrecked on their shores and where once upon a time even a bishop had his chief revenue from this dubious source. The conflict between ancient barbaric instincts and modern ethics gives him opportunity for subtle psychologic studies of the

outwardly simple people whom he depicts. His (untranslated) trilogy, *The Land of the Living*, dealing with a religious revival movement that swept over the district, is considered one of the finest works in modern Danish fiction.

Of lighter caliber but very charming in an episodic and whimsical way is Johannes Buchholtz who usually weaves his story about some incident in the life of the small provincial town.

Johannes V. Jensen began as a writer of the soil and was the most aggressive of the Jutland School. His short stories of his native parish, Himmerland, are not only redolent of the soil, they reek with the smell of manure and never-aired rooms and bedstraw on which generations have been conceived and born and died. Originality and force characterize these stories and reconcile us to their strident naturalism. But Jensen's imagination could not be confined within parochial bounds. He essayed the huge task of writing in fiction the history of the Nordic race from the time when the ancestor of the race first set his face toward the North while others fled before the oncoming glacial age. From this epoch, which is magnificently described in *Fire and Ice*, he continues his novel cycle down to the discovery of America—not by Leif Ericson, but by Columbus, whom he regards as a Nordic. Later he has developed his theme in novels of American life, trying to show it as an evolution of the Nordic race.

To Jensen belongs the distinction of having made the modern theory of evolution the basis of creative writing. As an evolutionist, he of course sweeps aside the grand heroic figures with which Romanticism in the early nineteenth century had peopled the past, not least in the Northern countries. He spares us nothing of the grimness and savagery through which the human race has passed in its upward striving, but he also makes us feel the spark that has disturbed the clod—a spark which he, however, does not attribute to any divine origin. He is frankly a pagan.

About twenty years ago Martin Andersen Nexö won instant popularity with his four-volume novel, *Pelle the Conqueror*, the story of a proletarian child. He himself stated it as his purpose to show how his hero "springs naked out of nothing and conquers the world." The book is largely autobiographical and is attractive espe-

cially because the author has conveyed an idea of how the very poor not only preserve their kindness and helpfulness to each other, but also their sense of humor and even a certain graciousness of living. Unfortunately Nexö in his later works has more and more abandoned this graciousness and become more and more polemical, to the detriment of his art. As he puts it, "Art is a bourgeois notion which we have to get rid of." In *Pelle the Conqueror* the polemics have not yet got the better of the story, and it may still be read with pleasure, though it cannot be taken as a fair picture of labor conditions in Denmark at present.

The post-war turning toward religion has found expression in J. Anker Larsen's large, chaotic novel, *The Philosopher's Stone,* of which the utmost charity can only say that it roused interest and won a prize by virtue of its purpose rather than its achievement. The author's later novel, *Martha and Mary,* attempting less achieves more.

A few months ago a twenty-five-year-old author, Marcus Lauesen, a gardner by occupation, launched a book that swept the country and sold in numbers unprecedented in Denmark. The book was a novel entitled *And Now We're Waiting for a Ship* and dealt with a once powerful family of shipowners and skippers in the part of Slesvig that was restored to Denmark after the World War. The author has been very successful in reproducing the atmosphere of the old patrician houses filled with costly oriental curios and with models of the proud ships that once sailed for the family and brought these curios home. The background, and indeed the whole story, is only a frame around the magnificent portrait of Fru Juliane Hagemeyer née Jessen, who at eighty-six seems to embody in herself the glories of many generations, but who on her deathbed at last has her eyes opened to the fact that the family fortune has been built on greed and violence which must bring a curse. In the delineation of the minor characters there are crudities and inconsistencies, easily accounted for by the young author's inexperience, but the figure of Fru Juliane stands out with such massive yet subtle effect that we are tempted to call it a work of genius.

Sweden is true to its old tradition in that many of its most gifted writers are lyrists, and this fact has been a handicap in making

Swedish literature known outside of Scandinavian boundaries. The works of Anders Österling, Bo Bergman, and other lyrists is available to the English reading public only in isolated poems scattered through magazines and anthologies. The same is true of the many excellent short stories produced in Sweden.

In the field of the short story the supreme genius is Hjalmar Söderberg. No one else in all Scandinavia has such a power of taking a mere gray pebble and polishing it till it glitters like a many-faceted gem. No one else can with such smiling detachment convey so profound a sense of the mystery and terror of life. Though he excels particularly in the short short story, Söderberg has written dramas and novels of distinction, among them his autobiographical novel *Martin Birck's Youth,* which has recently appeared in English. He is mentally akin to the realists of Scandinavian literature in the eighties of the last century. Like them he spares no accepted convention and is merciless in uncovering hypocrisy especially in religion and the discussions of sex. But he does not share that passionate belief in the future which was abroad in the land at the time when the late nineteenth-century ideas were still fresh. He is thoroughly disillusioned and skeptical. Disillusionment is evident also in the powerful but somber novels and short stories in which Sigfrid Siwertz pictures the conditions following the World War and the problems that arose out of its dislocation of standards and ideals.

An entirely new note of positive faith is sounded by Jarl Hemmer, a Swedish Finn, in his recent book *A Man and His Conscience.* This book not only won the first prize in Sweden in the recently concluded inter-Scandinavian novel contest, but has been universally hailed as possessing a merit that lifts it far above the dubious honor of literary prizes. It deals with the civil war in Finland when the country was freed from Russian dominion, and its most beautiful chapter describes the entry of the victorious White army into Helsingfors—when the "army" is seen to be only a ragged, starving horde of peasants, half-grown boys, feeble old men, and hard-working farmers who had risen to fight for their homes. There is a tender poignant beauty as of the northern spring in this picture of a country reborn and full of hope. The hero of the book is so convinced a White partisan that although a clergyman he fights as a volunteer. But fate wills that he should become the official pastor in the largest

of the concentration camps where the Reds are confined after the war and where many of them suffer death. Without giving up his own convictions, he learns to love his enemies, to feel that they are human like himself. He goes in among them, sharing their sufferings, meekly bearing their scorn, and finally giving his life for them. "Suffering is not so hard when you live it as when you only look at it," is the message he sends to his fellow-pastor who has fled, unable to bear the sight of so much misery. Hemmer's novel is written without much conscious art, but with a penetration into religious experience and with an impassioned conviction and impelling force that combine to make it a really great book.

Fifty years ago the Scandinavian literary world was in revolt against every institution of Church or State, every standard of morality, and every canon of taste. With the beginning of the nineties came a reaction against the reaction, a revolt against the revolt. Heidenstam and Hamsun raised the banner of a new romanticism and refused to let literature be the handmaid of social movements; Selma Lagerlöf's bright idealism rose from the constricting bands of realism. In the twentieth century came another wave of conservative revolt. The Jutland school in Denmark and the numerous peasant writers in Norway turned back to the soil and made it their concern to depict faithfully the most conservative strata of the population. Then came Sigrid Undset, a portrayer of family life, an adherent of the most conservative ideals of marriage and parenthood, and in her later books a champion of religious faith. Finally we have Jarl Hemmer proclaiming the old-fashioned ideal of complete self-annihilation on a religious basis. The cycle of revolt is complete. But whether conservative or radical, whether advocating individual rebellion or submission, nearly all the writers of the North are engrossed in ethical problems. Whether we consider the light skepticism of Söderberg, the lively narrative of Bojer, the atheism of Johannes V. Jensen, or the religious faith of Jarl Hemmer, we shall find always a literature of ideas rather than of mere entertainment.

FRED NEWTON SCOTT[1]

JOSEPH VILLIERS DENNEY

It is fitting that the National Council of Teachers of English should make acknowledgment of its debt to the late Professor Fred Newton Scott. Of the numerous educational associations and learned societies in which he was active, the National Council was his favorite. He believed it capable of doing the largest good to the greatest number. He took part in its establishment, was once its president, helped to formulate its policies, and remained influential in its councils to the end of his life.

The idea underlying this association is the essential unity of aim and purpose in English teaching, whatever the grade or the type of school. To bring together the great body of English teachers, to make each keenly aware of the ideals and practice of the rest, was in his opinion the first step toward the renovation of the whole. The greatest waste in education was due, he thought, to the spirit of separation and to indifference of the colleges to the purposes and achievements of the secondary and the elementary schools.

Organic education was the word of the hour forty years ago. To that ideal the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, the Schoolmasters Club of Michigan, the Modern Language Association, and later the English Association of Great Britain were all turning; and Professor Scott was active in all of them. It is not too much to say that he came to be regarded among us as the unofficial ambassador of each of these to all of the others, promoting through conferences, joint committees, and publications the recognition of common interests and pride in the common work. The organizing and reorganizing phase of educational endeavor has its special danger, and that danger is undue enthusiasm for mere machinery and method, with loss of real vitality, repression of individualism, and neglect of the inner spirit.

To the membership of the National Council of Teachers of English Professor Scott revealed in his addresses and publications his

[1] Read before the National Council of Teachers of English in Milwaukee, November 28, 1931.

sense of this danger by bringing forward topics in English scholarship and enriching the subject matter with which we teachers of English are engaged. His ideal was the satisfying life, both for the individual and for each social group. For every teacher he coveted the satisfaction of wider and deeper and more accurate understanding of the things and the people to be taught. Not only to the larger problems, such as the genesis of speech, did he bring the enlightenment that comes from broad and profound research. It was even more characteristic of him when dealing with minor problems to seek a safe foundation in psychology, anthropology, ethics, or other unexpectedly related fields.

To the smallest details he invariably lent a larger importance and significance by relating them to an underlying principle, or by examining their social effect. A question merely of word-choice and preference leads him to consider verbal taboos and to bring treasure-trove from the psychology of infancy and the theory of survival of the emotional acts and attitudes of primitive man. Always dissatisfied with the shallow, facile, and often misleading rules of the rhetoric books, he devoted a large share of his active life to a rehabilitation of the whole subject by bringing to bear upon one topic after another pertinent data and principles drawn from the sciences. The fact that a topic was regarded by fellow-scholars as trite, uninteresting, unpromising, vague, or worked out seemed to arouse in his mind the suspicion that it had never been investigated with real thoroughness or by appropriate methods. For several years at the beginning of his teaching experience he was almost alone in his chosen researches but later found allies in the neighboring fields of linguistics, psychology, and aesthetics. He lived the doctrine of pleasure in work and his courses in critical theory offered a real challenge to the strong, demanding character and mental fiber.

Two marked traits—his sense for beauty, and his rare humor—mitigated all severities. His humor was genial, always enlightening, and sometimes was applied with pedagogical intent. More of it would have been welcomed. The Phi Beta Kappa address on the Congress of Letters, with its mock-solemn treatment of current theories of literature as a national force, and its plausible misrep-

resentations of his admired friends, Shaw and Chesterton, illustrates a mood that was perhaps more often inhibited than expressed. In the humorous fable of Bidpai, involving the sandpiper, the woodpecker, the wise old owl, and the forest of learning, the worst feature of examination systems is revealed without stirring the controversial spirit in the least. The fascinating treatment of Whitman's prosody culminates in a memorable fantasy portraying Whitman as a giant-limbed old pagan god trying to master the mincing waltz-rhythm of mortals. But, unable to tolerate its restrictions, and needing a larger, freer movement, he tries marching, running, and leaping; and finally, "devising a kind of colossal minuet, he moves through it with a grandiose, galumphing majesty peculiar to himself, flinging his great limbs all abroad and shedding ambrosia from his flying locks, yet with all his abandon keeping time to the music, and in all the seeming waywardness of his saltations preserving the law and pattern of the dance."

His sense for beauty in literature and art was keen, but he communicated it to others by indirection and the creation of conditions favorable to its development. With mere appreciation and enthusiasm as the final goal he was not satisfied. Doubtless the multitude, including the majority of high-school and college students, are to be congratulated if they acquire the reading habit and experience at rare intervals the thrill that the poet or the artist must himself have felt in the act of creation. For the artist-teacher, however, eager to open new prospects and to sharpen blunted perceptions in the individual life, as well as to purify the taste of the entire pupil-group and thus affect community standards, much more is evidently necessary. Years ago Professor Scott in the Preface to an extensive bibliography on aesthetics expressed his belief that while there might be many approaches to the understanding of literary effects, the most obvious was by the isolation of problems and the application of the historical method to each. Later he added, in succession, the psychological approach to some, the study of genres, and finally he seems to have taken his greatest satisfaction in the investigation of communal origins. He felt and explained the special manifestations of beauty in individual works of literature and art, to be sure; but he also found beauty in the history of man's thoughts and admira-

tions, hopes and struggles, as expressed in times long past. Probably many of the problems in aesthetics and in critical theory, isolated for study, must wait long for a satisfying solution; but Professor Scott made the search itself an inspiration. The recognition of racial and primitive instinct-survivals in one's self as one contemplates the expression of remoter times was to him a poetical experience. The consciousness of race kinship he conceived as an important social asset, counting for the constant steadying of human life in the present and the widening of human sympathies. For this reason he opposed the tendency of many schools today to neglect the best in past life, literature, and art. There is no danger that the rapidly passing and vanishing shows of any present will ever escape contemporaneous attention. There is great danger that they will be experienced thoughtlessly in the mass, and without evaluation.

In spite of this, Professor Scott's own outlook was distinctly modern, and he sought and found wide acquaintance among the writers and thinkers of today, both here and abroad—poets, novelists, dramatists, and editors. But his chief friendships were with his own best students and with the teachers of youth—many of them in this organization. In the words of one of these, he taught his people "to know the happiness of intellectual achievement made one with the life of every day, to set themselves high standards and never to be able to follow low ones, to be joyous students as long as they live."

FUNCTIONAL CENTERS OF EXPRESSION[1]

ROY IVAN JOHNSON

I wish to introduce my remarks with a quotation from the committee report published in the *North Central Association Quarterly* for March, 1931. While the report was in process of preparation I wrote the committee a letter setting forth the functional viewpoint in composition as I understand it. The committee honored the statement by incorporating it in the final report. In quoting the following paragraphs, therefore, I am merely quoting myself. It is needless to say that I am in hearty agreement with the ideas which they express.

Speaking in a more serious vein, however, I wish to give unstinted commendation to the report as a whole. It is an outstanding piece of work in our special field of interest. It is compact, but inclusive; it is expository, but practical; it states principles, but does not neglect concrete applications. It represents sound thinking on the part of a capable committee. It is one of the significant documents in our current professional literature.

Following is the quotation to which I have already referred:

> The functional idea in composition involves two things: first, the definition of the course in terms of *things to be done;* and, second, the organization of instruction around expressional activities common to social experience. The first item requires elimination (or radical subordination) of abstract, theoretical, or purely academic subject matter in favor of activities which are immediately purposeful. The second item goes further: it requires a justification of composition activities in the light of the well-established doctrine of social need. "Where does this activity emerge in the pupil's present experience?" and "Where is it likely to emerge in the pupil's future experience?" are questions that must be continually asked. In other words, if the training in composition is to prepare pupils to meet real situations, we must know what those situations are likely to be and we must anticipate them by using the same or similar situations as challenges to pupil effort.
>
> Even a brief analysis of everyday experience will reveal the character of the list of functional activities which should be the basis of a course in composition. A more extended analysis will refine the list and give us confidence to proceed.

[1] Read before the Junior High School Section of the National Council of Teachers of English in Milwaukee, November 28, 1931.

Such inventories of expressional needs give us numerous specific activities which fall easily into certain functional categories: letter-writing, conversation, group discussion, making a talk, reporting experiences (direct or indirect), giving directions or explanations, telling a story, keeping personal memoranda. These are the functional centers of expression. With the numerous situations for instruction and practice which they immediately suggest, they offer an alluring opportunity to the teacher of composition.

It is important to note that the functional idea of composition considers immediate needs as well as future needs. Thus composition training is projected into every department of school life. Correlation with other subjects becomes one method of making the course functional. Whatever pupils think, talk, and write about in connection with their various school subjects is natural content for composition. But the English activities of the classroom, though sometimes artificially evoked, will not differ greatly from the functional types of expression already mentioned. As the school becomes more and more an integrated social unit, the activities involved approximate the activities of out-of-school experience.

Let me point out, first of all, that the functional centers as here defined are simply categories under which numerous expressional activities may be classified. They are not situations. They are "fields" in which situations in abundance are found. Or, to state it differently, they are types of activity which are continually illustrated in the many situations which call for language use.

The question immediately arises: Are the types of activity called for in school life different from those called for in out-of-school life? A list of expressional activities required in carrying on the ordinary work of the school will not differ greatly from a list of expressional activities derived from a study of life-needs outside the schoolroom. Some time ago I received from teachers in various departments of the high school lists of oral and written language activities required of pupils in their work. I found approximately 80 per cent correspondence between the activities named and the functional centers of expression as derived from an analysis of out-of-school needs. The chief differences were to be noted in such formal requirements as writing a sonnet, engaging in formal debate, annotating a map, etc. The value of these special activities must be judged, of course, in the light of the purpose they serve in the school program. The formal debate, for example, represents a distinctly artificial situation. But if a teacher can use it as a device to promote interesting

and effective class discussion without overemphasizing its formalities, it may be justified as a legitimate procedure.

It is dangerous, however, to seek too diligently for justification of a favorite procedure which apparently misses the mark when judged by its direct functional application to life. Too often the thing that happens in educational adjustment is not a modification of practice but a rationalizing of present procedures to satisfy (more or less) new educational criteria which we intellectually accept but behavioristically resist. Thus we have accepted the unit theory of instructional organization. We comfort ourselves with the terminology without disturbing the familiar sequence of subject matter. We adopt the "functional centers of expression" and immediately proceed to apply the term to the whole gamut of standardized theme assignments. We need the courage in our thinking and in our practice to make clear-cut applications of vital educational doctrine.

Much emphasis has been laid upon the importance of using "life-situations" in teaching. And I do not wish to detract from that emphasis. I wish to point out, however, that there is a significant difference between a list of "functional centers" for the guidance of composition teachers and a detailed list of "situations" which may occur in the course of the term's work. If teaching must always await the arrival of a life-situation, much practical instruction will be deferred until adult experience forces the necessity of learning. Writing letters of application is a proper subject of instruction in the high school even though no actual demand for such a letter may be made upon any of the pupils until after they have completed their high-school work. The practice which the pupils get may be described as vicarious. They project themselves, by virtue of their imaginations, into situations which call for letter-writing. They "take the part" of a character and write the letters which he would write. The rôle which the pupil plays in such a practice assignment may be that of his own mature self doing an entirely imaginary but wholly probable and practical task.

Let us not be afraid of the imaginative situations in teaching composition. We continually seek vicarious experience in reading to supplement the first-hand experience of everyday life. If we are

to cover adequately in school training the functional activities in composition, we must do it, in part, on the play level. We cannot depend on the situation's "just happening." We must sometimes make it to order. The caution to be observed is this: Every situation set up for practice should represent unmistakably a type of activity which is socially useful—that is, it should grow out of the functional centers of expression. In other words, the training situation must be like the life situation. Thus the needs of later experience may be anticipated by utilizing actual situations in school life which are comparable to situations in later life, or by setting up practice situations on the play level which illustrate the various functional centers.

The play level, of course, is simply the level of imagination. It is a serious mistake to assume that the play-level type of instruction is appropriate only in the lower grades. It characterizes learning, to some extent, at all stages. To play the part of a character in a hypothetical situation, to write an answer to a make-believe letter, to construct a conversation between two characters in a story, to plan a talk which would be appropriate in a given situation, or to express in any other manner ideas which will meet the requirement of the pupil's experience—present or future, real or vicarious—is a type of intellectual play which provides practice in expression and offers a wholesome challenge to the imagination.

To watch ideas grow is exceedingly interesting—and encouraging. Only a few years ago the formal "theme topic" occupied the stage of our thought. We were concerned with the rhetoric of pure description. The term "functional center" is a newcomer in our vocabularies. Its service has been to help crystallize in our thinking some of the conclusions that have been forced upon us by the impact of social theory upon a traditionalized curriculum. Evidence is abundant that our courses of study, our textbooks, our classroom practices, are more and more responsive to the functional idea. The adaptation may be slow, but we must bear in mind that healthful growth is usually slow growth.

One example of the conspicuous emergence of the functional idea in English expression is found in the course-of-study monograph published this year by the public schools of Denver. The commit-

tee in charge of the preparation of the course has been frank enough to put the emphasis where it belongs in a course in composition—on actual and useful things to be done. It has not been content to garnish the traditional platter with a few hints of functional possibilities. The "functional centers" are named, and the various activities included under this designation are specifically recommended for study and practice during the successive terms in a very systematic manner. The treatment of each activity is accompanied by very valuable self-help questions which aid the pupil in preparing, presenting, and appraising his work. Undoubtedly the Denver course has taken an advanced position on the subject of functional composition.

Let me comment briefly upon the fear which some teachers entertain that the swing toward the "practical," or "useful," in composition will unduly minimize the importance of "creative," or "literary," effort. It is true that a modern course of study which exemplifies the functional idea will not set up for the average pupil the goal of technical literary excellence. To be able to produce one or another of the literary types is a specialized ability not required in the normal round of experience. It is not correct to assume, however, that the functional program is not a creative program. All composition is creative—no matter how much it may suffer in popular estimation under the bane of utility. And for the talented pupil a large place for genuine literary effort will always be found, either in a special course offered for a selected group or in the supplementary activities of the regular course.

Before concluding this discussion I wish to mention one more practical consideration which supports the adoption of a functional program in composition. Today we look upon the teaching of English as a co-operative task which extends into every classroom and into every department of school life. What an advantageous position we occupy when we accept as basic in our composition teaching those expressional abilities which are needed in the classroom as well as in extra-curricular experience! Making reports of observation, giving directions, formulating announcements, making class talks, engaging in group discussion, and other normal classroom activities offer an opportunity for correlating under the head of Eng-

lish practice the various departmental interests of the school, whereas the opportunity for such correlation is very slender if the recognized stock-in-trade of the English department is the formal theme, the academic and somewhat theoretical forms of discourse, and the rhetoric of literary types. The gradual extension of English training into every active phase of school life and the adoption of the functional centers of expression as the chief determinants of instruction in the composition courses are mutually complementary trends in modern English practice.

EVALUATION OF COMPOSITION TEXTBOOKS

REPORT OF NATIONAL COUNCIL COMMITTEE

DORA V. SMITH, CHAIRMAN

The accompanying check-list is the work of the committee on the evaluation of textbooks in composition appointed by the National Council of Teachers of English and assisted by its various experts in the teaching of composition in secondary schools.

Owing to the lack of objective evidence concerning most of the problems with which such an instrument must deal, the committee early abandoned the idea of producing a scorecard with attempted numerical weighting of items. What percentage out of a possible one hundred should be given, for instance, to the general point of view of the textbook? To most people, it is worth the whole 100 per cent. At least, if the point of view is archaic or out of harmony with one's program of teaching composition, nothing else in the book matters. That settles the question of selection once and for all. What percentage should be given for the inclusion of grammar that is functional versus mere categorical treatment of forms and rules? How much should be deducted for the omission of letter-writing? For the failure to give adequate attention to the development and organization of ideas? What percentage should be added for the inclusion of life-activities in composition? The mere suggestion of such numerical evaluation is ludicrous in view of the present lack of objective standards of measurement.

It is for this reason that the committee has proposed merely a series of questions which may profitably be raised for consideration by any teacher faced with the problem of selecting a textbook in composition. The questions are a composite of those submitted by twenty experts in composition from within the membership of the National Council, ten of them concerned with the content and organization of composition and ten with grammar and the mechanics of expression. A preliminary form of the check-list was tried out on a group of one hundred teachers, seventy-five of them young and inexperienced, and twenty-five of them teachers of experience both on textbook committees and in the classroom. The revised form incorporates their suggestions as to content and clarity of expression. In deference to their request and that of co-operating members of the National Council, the provision for modified responses has been added in order to furnish some numerical basis for comparison by topics. Comparison of total scores is futile because the relative weight of individual topics is necessarily unknown. It is hoped that the bibliography of scientific investigations which accompanies the check-list may be of value in disseminating what information now exists in regard to the major problems of curriculum content and method in the teaching of composition in secondary schools.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE OF THE CHECK-LIST

The purpose of this check-list is to raise for consideration certain questions of paramount importance in the selection of textbooks in composition. It aims to direct the thought of the inexperienced teacher in a situation in which she must rely upon her own judgment in the evaluation of a textbook. Evidence presented in the Bibliography which accompanies the check-list, together with the opinion of experts, points to the desirability of an affirmative answer to the questions as stated. Lack of objective data concerning the majority of them prohibits a numerical weighting of items. Those considered most important are starred. It is obvious, however, that textbooks will vary greatly in the degree to which each of these factors is present. In order that some numerical basis of comparison may be provided it is suggested that the following procedure be used:

1. Place a "3" on the line in front of each item to which you can answer an unqualified "yes" for the textbook under consideration.

2. Place a "0" before each question to which you must answer an unqualified "no."
3. If your answer is qualified but nearer "no" than "yes," put a "1" in front of the item.
4. If your answer is qualified but nearer "yes" than "no," put a "2" in front of the question.
5. Total your points within each of the sections indicated by the roman numerals. These figures may then be compared with the ratings of other textbooks for the same section. *It is the consensus of opinion among members of the committee that no textbooks should be considered for adoption which average less than 2 on the points starred.*

CHECK-LIST OF QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE SELECTION OF A TEXTBOOK IN COMPOSITION

Total

_____ I. The Viewpoint of the Textbook

_____*A. Does the author recognize that composition is a social activity? (47)

_____*B. Does he recognize the uses of composition in everyday life? (5) (14) (19) (33)

_____ II. The Author's Style

_____ A. Is the style stimulating, suggestive, vigorous?

_____ B. Is there sufficient concrete detail to develop general concepts?

_____*C. Is the exposition clear, accurate, and simple enough to be readily understood?

_____*D. Is it suited to the age of child for whom it is intended?

_____ E. Does it address itself to the pupil?

_____ III. Proportion and Organization

_____ A. Does the author give adequate attention to (25)

____1. The motivation of expression?

____2. The stimulation of interests and ideas?

_____3. The selection and organization of ideas?
_____4. The development of power of expression?
_____5. The habituation of correctness in speech and writing?

_____*B. Does the author give to oral composition the proportion of time dictated by its prominence in the activities of everyday life? (5) (14) (25) (33)

_____*C. Does he give to letter-writing the emphasis demanded by its practical importance in everyday life? (5) (14)

_____ D. Does the author stress the subordinate and contributory function of correctness in speech and writing in relation to the larger purpose of expression? (25)

_____ E. Does the author organize his material into sectional divisions large enough to stimulate interest, to give perspective, and to promote well-rounded growth?

_____*F. Does the author organize his materials in such a way as to

_____1. Care for pupils of varying abilities and interests within the same class?
_____2. Make both teacher and pupil conscious of the ends toward which they are working and the degree of progress attained?
_____3. Provide for flexibility in adapting the assignments to the individual classroom situation?

_____ IV. Motivation

_____*A. Does the author create in the pupil the desire to express himself?

_____*B. Does he identify the composition work of the classroom with the expressional activities of life both within and without the school? (5) (14) (25) (33)

_____ C. Does he keep before the pupil the purpose of each activity in which he is asked to engage?

_____ D. Does the author stimulate observation and interest in a wide variety of subjects?

_____ E. Does he arouse the initiative and originality of the student?

_____*F. Does he emphasize the importance of thinking?

_____*G. Does he use the social purposes of composition to encourage not merely correct but clear, vigorous, and interesting expression?

_____ H. Does he identify his composition activities with actual experience instead of merely setting up series of topics for "theme writing"? (47)

_____ I. Does he promote additional activities among superior pupils?

_____*J. Does he promote progress by offering numerous means of self-criticism:

____1. By providing standards for the evaluation of one's own writing?

____2. By offering bases of comparison with the work of others?

____3. By furnishing means of comparison with earlier achievement?

_____ K. Does he throw the responsibility for progress upon the pupil himself?

_____ V. Activities Proposed

_____ A. General characteristics:

____*1. Are the activities suggested by the author suitable and interesting to the grades for which they are recommended? (13) (16) (36)

____ 2. Are they representative of a wide range of experience and thought?

____ 3. Are there projects suggested which allow for class, group, and individual activity?

____ 4. Are these projects timely, interest-arousing, and thought-provoking?

____*5. Is sufficient direction given for the execution of these projects?

____ 6. Are the tasks specific, not general?

____ 7. Are the illustrations pertinent to the pupils' experience?

____*8. Does the book contain sufficient practice material for applying principles developed?

____ 9. Are the practice materials so graded in difficulty as to be easily adaptable to the needs of groups and individuals of varying ability?

_____10. Does the book offer a wide range of choice in suggestions for assignments?

_____11. Does the author stimulate creative writing among pupils capable of more literary achievements?

_____12. Is there plentiful correlation of activities with those of other subjects of study? (12) (36)

_____*B. Does the text furnish adequate experience in the following language activities of everyday life? (5) (14) (25) (33) (39)

_____ Announcements
_____ Book reviewing
_____ Conversation
_____ Creative writing
_____ Current event discussion
_____ Debating
_____ Dictionary, use of
_____ Explaining or giving instructions
_____ Gathering and reporting information
_____ Informal discussion
_____ Interviewing
_____ Letter-writing
_____ Magazine materials, use of
_____ Note-taking
_____ Public discussion according to parliamentary form
_____ Reporting speeches or committee findings
_____ Speech-making
_____ Story-telling

_____ C. Does the author offer sufficient aids and devices for

____*1. Development of vocabulary and use of the dictionary

____ 2. Development of feeling for phrasing

____*3. Development of effectiveness in sentence structure

____ 4. Selecting and organizing material before writing

____ 5. Outlining

____*6. Development of well-rounded paragraphs

____ 7. Making of skilful transitions

____ 8. Effectiveness of beginning and ending

_____ VI. The Mechanics of Expression

_____ A. Grammar:

____*1. Is the grammatical material motivated by constant relation to actual language situations?

____ 2. Does the author provide for measurement and stimulalation of progress both for the individual and for the class?

____*3. Does he provide for individual diagnosis and remedial work? (35) (43)

____*4. Is there large stress upon sentence sense and sentence structure with repeated review of the topic? (20) (27) (41) (45) (46)

____*5. Is the content chosen on the basis of function in accord with the findings of scientific investigations:

____*a*) With relatively large stress on points of difficulty such as verb and pronoun? (2) (4) (6) (7) (9) (11) (15) (24) (44)

____*b*) With recognition of points of debatable usage? (8) (19) (21) (29) (48) (49) (50)

____*c*) With emphasis upon function not classification (i.e., Are classifications of adverbs into adverbs of degree, cause, manner, etc., omitted, and the use of the adverb versus the adjective stressed? Is power to express thought relationships with exactness made more important than ability to label sentences as compound or complex?) (1) (8)

(23) (25) (30)
(31) (33) (34)
(37) (38) (42)

____*6. Is there ample provision for repeated drill upon a few specific points instead of inadequate drill upon many non-essentials?

____ 7. Is the program cumulative with adequate provision throughout for review?

_____ B. Capitalization and punctuation:

____*1. Are the requirements limited to matters of usage in our own day as revealed by the report of the Minimum Essentials Committee of the National Council of Teachers of English? (10) (17) (18) (19) (28) (32) (40)

____*2. Are distinctions between required and optional usage clearly made? (19)

____*3. Are ample drill materials provided?

____ 4. Is the program cumulative with adequate provision for review?

____ 5. Does the author provide for measurement and stimulation of progress both for the individual and for the class?

____*6. Does he provide for individual diagnosis and remedial work? (43)

____ 7. Is there constant provision for use of the skills mastered, in actual writing situations?

____ VII. Physical Format

_____ A. Mechanical make-up:

____1. Is the textbook a good standard size, easily handled by the pupil? (i.e., roughly 5½ inches × 7¾ inches).

____2. Is it easily opened and durable in binding?

____3. Has the paper a non-gloss surface?

____4. Is it heavy enough to insure that print on the obverse side shall not show through?

____5. Are the margins wide enough to insure an uncrowded page?

____6. Is the page well-spaced so as to emphasize outstanding points?

____7. Are the lines not more than 90 mm. long?

____8. Is the type dark, plain, and distinct—not less than 10 point?

_____ B. Attractiveness and effectiveness of form:

____1. Is the book attractive in appearance?

____2. Has it appropriate and effective illustrations?

____3. Has it graphic devices for aid in outlining, letter form, word derivations, etc.?

____4. Are the chapter and section captions clear, brief, well-spaced, interesting?

____5. Has the book a usable index?

____6. Has it a usable table of contents?

____7. Has it a clear and impelling preface, giving the purpose of the author and suggestions for use?

C. Does the copyright date (issued or revised) suggest that the book is recent enough to reflect modern tendencies in teaching?

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A MEMORY DISTURBED

To S. A. LEONARD

MERRILL BISHOP

It looks so calm, this lake beneath the knoll,
And yet from off the jets of land the breezes blow
And change the waters green to streaks of black,
Like fangs that tremble in a rattler's throat,
To be withdrawn when he basks in heat; so would it seem
To one who stands above the glassy glow, to live
In dream the tragedy that changes points of view
And makes one feel the travesty in all this scene.
Too much of sentiment I feel to linger here.
With all its beauty rare, it still is drear.
I do not need your mortal hand to feel
The energy of life, as now it seems
My faith is weak. You still must live
Though all this scene exclaims, "It is not so."

A VIA MEDIA IN THE TEACHING OF LITERATURE

HELENE WILLEY HARTLEY

The present controversy concerning courses of study for the teaching of literature, developing under insistent demand for change, seems to have come to fairly clear-cut formulation in two distinct points of view. Each has its vigorous proponents—recent articles in the *English Journal* bear witness;[1] each is vigorously attacked by its opponents; each is exerting influence in the current reshaping of courses of study.

The one group, advocating the more traditional course consisting of books carefully chosen for thorough reading and study by an entire class under the instruction of a teacher, is vigorously attacked by its opponents as clinging to the outworn, as inconsistent with current principles of education, and as defending a practice that has been proved to defeat the very end it seeks. Instead, the second group proposes that books shall be freely chosen by the pupils themselves, not so much in terms of literary merit as of adaptation to the needs of individuals, and not for group study but for individual reading without intrusion of instruction or fear of examination. They in turn fall under the severe criticism of their opponents as creating chaos, lowering standards, too readily abandoning their teaching task, losing precious time as they make "ontogeny recapitulate phylogeny" needlessly with each new generation. Intensive study (with its variant of "extensive study," when the number of books is increased) versus free reading may be regarded as summing up the controversy.

Now just as competition is the life of business, so controversy breathes the breath of life into educational movements. But the history of educational change reiterates convincingly the principle that solution of problems lies with neither extreme, but with a merging of the two, or with a middle course partaking of both but identical with neither. With one such middle course this article is concerned.

[1] H. F. Seeley, "Appreciation through Intensive Reading," *English Journal*, March, 1931; Abraham H. Lass, "Laus Veteris," *English Journal*, October, 1931.

At the outset let us admit the difficulties, even the evils, that have been pointed out in each of the plans. Let us grant that intensive study of literature has frequently left books "beaten to a pulp," stripped of beauty, distasteful in memory, as classes pass from one classic to another never voluntarily to return. We must still agree that through such study, under the instruction of a genuine teacher, you and I, and thousands of others who never became teachers of English, have found our way happily into great pieces of literature which we should never have approached if left to ourselves. As teachers, too, we have watched that strange phenomenon of contagion of group enthusiasm kindling to life a response to and understanding of a difficult bit of literature in a child to whom that piece of literature would have remained forever inaccessible had he been left in the cold isolation of his own inabilities. Something there is in the lift of a group as under the help of a genuine teacher they find their way together into a piece of literature a step beyond what they would undertake themselves. So they grow. So they come into possession of the power to read, which is the basis of appreciation and which constitutes the best possible justification for giving literature a place as a curricular subject.

On the other hand, let us grant that free reading, compared with our former orderly definiteness, is chaotic, frequently wasteful, too patently an expression of a current mood of impatience with the sturdy effort of other days, and too freely sacrificing all other values to the one of pleasure in reading. Yet anyone who has watched a class resolve itself into thirty or forty eager, adventuring individuals under a free reading program will think twice before wishing to reduce them again to one group with one book to be studied. The range of types and the various levels of difficulty of the books they choose make it impossible to regard them as a unit. Their glowing comment on this new freedom, their intense absorption as contrasted with the old listlessness; all these substantiate the claim that this is the study of literature in its truest sense.

Advantages both extremes surely offer. Must we lose the one if we cleave to the other? May it not be that we may seize upon both procedures at their best and by integrating them into a unified whole utilize the advantages of each toward the objective we seek,

the objective of developing in boys and girls a constantly increasing power to read?

Here, for example, is a group of boys and girls, homogeneous, perhaps, in one respect only—they have for the most part not yet attained the reading power required to follow a sustained plot through the pages of a long novel. They are limited in this interest and power-to-follow to the number of pages of a story in their favorite magazine or to the loose episodic plots of their favorite serial books. Long books—ugh!

The teacher chooses a key book carefully. (And a "key book" it is indeed to be, chosen for the purpose of unlocking a whole new reading area.) It must have a wide appeal in its characters and setting, for this group of pupils represents many types of background. It must not be too difficult in vocabulary, backgrounds, or demands upon the imagination. It must be difficult, however, in one respect—it must present a more sustained development of plot than this group are accustomed to read by themselves.

The book chosen, the group are off together in pursuit of this unfolding plot. High speed at first to get quickly *in medias res;* large units mapped out by the teacher for next reading, with the kind of question or hint that encourages the reader not to stop until he finds out; everything subordinated to keeping alive interest in the what-happened-next and to aiding them to follow the rise of one event out of another as its cause, in the inevitable forging of the chain of plot. Group reading, this; "intensive study," if you will, at its best; but directed to the end of development of a specific power.

So at length they reach the resolving of the plot. The book is finished. Now they are ready to have a try at it by themselves. Free reading replaces group study. Books of all levels of difficulty appear, *kept only within bounds of this newly opened world of the sustained tale.* Here is George, who was carried along through the group-read book more by the zest of the others than by his own power. New glimmerings he has of what lies here, however. For him, now, a simpler book on which to try his wings. Here is Doris, who read the group book through by herself the first night and after that had "great fun remembering not to give anything away," but

who grew in power as she piqued the interest of the others with her cryptic comments on the story, and in the group discussion saw points she had missed in her rapid reading. She has already read another long plot story by herself at the teacher's recommendation and is now ready to go exploring in more difficult ones.

All the usual characteristics of free reading at its best are here. There is freedom to lay aside a book started but not well chosen and to try another until a right one is found. There are eager exchanges of favorites, much consultation with each other and with the teacher as to "what this book is like"; comparing of reactions; and a wide range of types, levels, and numbers of books read.

When through a period of this individualized or free reading each child has had his chance to explore, to try for himself this new reading power, they will become a group again. Experiences will be pooled; evaluations will be made. They are ready now for new worlds to explore, given power to enter them.

As a group again, under the leadership of the teacher, they take another step on the path to reading power and interest. It may be further steps in learning to read the many-sided novel. It may be steps into drama, or poetry, or good solid reading for a writer's opinion and its worth. It may be wise to pause to open up an interest area, as of pioneer tales or tales of chivalry. But whatever the reading development sought, both group-work with instruction and free reading with a modicum of guidance will be used to contribute each its peculiar advantage to the attaining of the specific end sought.

So it is that many teachers are working out the middle course in curriculum reorganization. We need further analytical studies of reading power to discover needed points of attack. We need experimental building of lists of books around specific goals, with provision for a range of abilities in free reading. We need teachers who know literature so truly that the purpose for which they choose a book will always be *consonant with the purpose of the author* and never a distortion of it.

Not intensive study *versus* free reading, then, but intensive study *and* free reading integrated to one end—the development of power to read books as the basis of all pleasure in reading and of any true appreciation of literature.

READING ABILITY OF HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS[1]

AGNES SLEMONS

That the reading ability of high-school students is often distressingly poor and that drills for improvement show enormously large returns are facts quite readily accepted by teachers in general. The direct relation, also, of a student's reading ability to his success in school work is quite obvious.

This study is reported, then, not as anything new or original but as showing one method, quite easy to use, which gave apparently large returns in a short space of time.

Ninety-six students in the first semester of eleventh-grade English were used. They were distributed in three sections, and had a median IQ of 100 as shown by the Terman Group Intelligence Test, Form A.

The students were tested by the Nelson Denny Reading Test, Form A, and made a median score of 56, which, according to the test standards, is slightly above the 50 percentile for a small number of scores available. Scores made on the first ten lessons of the McCall-Crabbe, *Standard Test Lessons in Reading,* Book V, showed the whole group reading slightly above eighth-grade ability. These students, it must be kept in mind, were in the first semester of the eleventh grade.

Intensive training in reading was given three days each week for one month, and at the end of that time, according to the McCall-Crabbe test lesson scores, the median was midway between tenth- and eleventh-grade ability, a gain of slightly more than two years in reading ability. One student showed a gain from sixth- to tenth-grade ability.

The Nelson Denny Reading Test, Form A, administered a second time, showed a gain of 3.5 during the month's training period. This gain, interpreted in the light of test standards, is a gain to

[1] This study was made in the fall semester of 1930, under the general supervision of Dr. W. J. Saupe of the educational Psychology department of the University of Missouri, and with the co-operation of Principal Ralph Irons, F. J. Reitz High School, Evansville, Indiana, where the writer was at that time teaching.

somewhere near the 40 percentile for the eleventh year, as shown in a small number of cases taking the test. Part of this gain is doubtless due to the student's familiarity with the test, which, however, had not been discussed during the time of reading training.[2]

Further evidence of gain in reading ability, aside from that shown by the McCall-Crabbe *Test Lessons* and the Nelson Denny Reading Test, was shown by a diagnostic test made by the teacher and administered both before and after the training period. This test consisted of 25 paragraphs with test questions, five paragraphs arranged to test each of the following reading abilities: (1) to get details; (2) to get a general impression; (3) to predict beyond given events; (4) to follow directions; (5) to select the topic sentence.

Three distinct tests, then, show rapid gains in reading ability, made over one month's intensive training. Only a few simple and obvious things were done to bring about this gain.

First, training was based on the assumption that the students were deficient in all the foregoing abilities mentioned, and especially, according to the teacher's diagnostic test results, in reading to select the topic sentence, reading to predict beyond given events, and in reading to get details.

Drill material for the various reading abilities consisted of little tests made by the teacher, based on selections in the students' textbook, *Literature and Life,* Book III. Sometimes the test questions were written on the board, covered with a map, and uncovered just as the students started to read the selections in their books. Occasionally the questions were mimeographed and given to each student.

These original test lessons may be illustrated by a selection from the diagnostic test, already mentioned. The test based on material in *Literature and Life,* Book III, were quite similar to these.

2B—To Get a General Impression

Children who come in frequent contact with anyone who has active tuberculosis are in grave danger, though they may look the picture of health and have none of the familiar warning signs—underweight, a cough, fatigue, and poor digestion.

[2] According to the Nelson Denny test standards, students gain approximately 1.4 where the test is administered a second time. Form B of the test was not off the press at that time.

A large number of deaths from tuberculosis occur between the ages of 25 and 45. Yet in most of these cases the disease began in childhood, though there may have been a re-infection at some later time.

Put an "X" in front of the answer which tells when tuberculosis often begins.

1. Between 25 and 45.
2. Before the age of twelve.
3. After 45.
4. In connection with another disease.

3C—To Predict Beyond Given Events

We can judge the climate of any period or locality by the animals and plants that lived in it. Thus coral reefs now grow only in the warm seas of the tropics; and when we find the remains of ancient coral reefs in any part of the world we may reasonably conclude that the sea in which they were formed was then tropical or subtropical. Some English limestones are so crowded with corals that they may be fairly called coral reefs; we may infer that they were formed in warmer water than any met with in British seas at the present time. Limestones which have been regarded as coral reefs were formed in Britain in the fifth, sixth, seventh, and tenth geologic periods, but there is no evidence of such deposits in the earliest periods.

Place "X" in front of answer which seems most nearly true in light of the paragraph above.

1. The climate of Britain was originally extremely hot and since has gradually cooled.
2. The climate of the British Isles has always been much the same as at present.
3. Much variation in climate has taken place in the British Isles.
4. Coral reefs are now being formed off the coast of Britain.

The McCall-Crabbe *Standard Test Lessons in Reading,* Book V, furnished a second type of drill material. The results of these test lessons, since they have standardized scores, of course were more tangible than those of the teacher's own tests. Thirty of the McCall-Crabbe test lessons were used during the month. A study of the lessons shows that they test for various types of reading ability. A copy of these test lessons, kept in the classroom, was provided each student.

Prior to any testing, and at the beginning of the month's drill period, an explanation of the problem of reading was given, and an attempt made to get the students to see how vital a problem it is. The various types of reading ability were discussed and illustrated.

As the reading drills began, sharp watch was kept to observe as

nearly as possible how each student read and, if possible, to discover why he read well or poorly. In this way the lip-reader, the student who read in a whisper, the student slow to start, and the student who allowed his attention to become distracted were discovered. These students were called for individual conference with the instructor, and their difficulties pointed out, together with suggestions for improvement. For example, the lip-reader was told to keep his lips tight together and to consciously attempt to avoid his difficulty, while the others were offered simple practical suggestions for overcoming their various disabilities.

The necessity for attempting to carry over the training given in the English class to all other reading done by the students was shown.

A genuine effort was made to keep the drill periods full of life and pep, and to encourage the students to want to improve their reading. They seemed to enjoy the drill periods.

A scrutiny of test results shows that the bright pupils and the dull ones derived about equal amounts of benefit from the intensive training in reading. Both improved materially.

A PLAN OF CORRELATION

LIESETTE J. McHARRY

Our present interest in the principle of correlation gives evidence of the fruitfulness of its possibilities. Most pertinent of these is the breaking down of the barriers of specialization that restrict our secondary teaching today. However, our plans of correlation have all but failed to put the principle into action. We have faith in the results that correlation may bring about, but we are not sure of the ways and means by which it is to become an operating principle in our classroom teaching. The burden of the planning in the past has fallen to the lot of the English teachers. No doubt this has been as it should be; for a balanced arrangement of high-school subject matter leaves English in the pivotal position. Realizing this fact and enthusiastic in their desire to serve, English teachers have

drawn up many plans that have been ratified and put to test by principals and fellow faculty members. And yet, as we follow the history of many of these plans, we find that they have flourished only for a time. Miss Ruth Mead Vose in 1925 reported a very careful investigation of experiments in which formal attempts had been made to correlate all high-school subject matter with English. She reached this very definite conclusion: "We find that many of the plans are merely nominal or have frankly been abandoned. This survey of the field of co-operation has shown the general failure of its practice. . . . . However, the principles involved in the scheme may be correct even though practice has failed."[1]

As a student of the subject, I have been much concerned in looking for the causes of failure. Many of the causes, which have grown out of the general error on the part of enthusiasts, are the attempts to make every class an English class. This cannot be done —at least, not as long as the records of appointments committees combine to show that the average teachers of subjects other than English take no more English than is required in their preparation for the teaching profession. A serious cause of failure has been that plans have been too ambitious—too elaborate and detailed to be practical. But I am wondering if lack of motivation has not been the most common, underlying cause of failure in our attempts at correlation. May it not be quite probable that our planning has been one-sided, that it has been concerned with intricate arranging and systematizing of subject matter and devices to the exclusion of preparing receptive minds and hearts among our students and co-workers. We must have a system by which we bring together the interests of our various classrooms; but we must be mindful ever of the fact that the very best plan we may make for someone else will fail unless the someone else wants to make it succeed. On the other hand, there are very few limitations to what this modern generation can do when it is propelled forward by the inner drive, "We want to!" There are few parents in the world today who have not met the problem of a child's indifference to a certain task by the reprimand, "That's stubbornness! You could do that all right if

[1] Ruth Mead Vose, *Co-operative Teaching of English in the Secondary Schools.* Thesis, University of Illinois, 1925. P. 55.

you wanted to." In much of our drive toward a correlation of subject matter, we have been bringing many excellent schemes to stubborn minds and hearts. Can we not as English teachers go just a bit farther than we have gone in this matter by firing students and fellow teachers with an enthusiasm for what we do in our classrooms and by becoming, in turn, sincerely enthusiastic about what they are doing in their classrooms. Emerson has said, "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm." We believe correlation is a great cause. It means, in the end, the amalgamation of English, history, science, foreign language, mathematics, etc., into an education. Who is enthusiastic over English? The English teacher. Who is enthusiastic over science? The science teacher. And so we proceed down the faculty line. When is a boy or girl enthusiastic over English? When he is in the English classroom. When is he enthusiastic over history? When he is in the history classroom. To be sure, there is some exaggeration in these answers, but there is also much truth in them.

In my own work I have accepted a very simple definition of correlation. To me correlation means the choosing of subject matter and the devising of plans in such a way that the teacher may guide students from one class to the next. If I am to be a force for correlation I shall motivate students to appreciate a functional relation between the subjects they are studying by my accepting the subject matter of all departments in high school as worthy material upon which to base my teaching of expression and appreciation; and I shall lead students to see that there is a rich fund of general information that carries over from one subject to another. For instance, it is my duty to show students that the word "unity" has the same general meaning in a book of rhetoric that it has in a book of physics. To be sure I have a right to expect the teachers of other departments to guide the students back to the English room by demanding of them certain minimum essentials of expression; but if I truly believe English to be the pivotal subject of the high-school curriculum, then I owe it to the cause of correlation to lead these teachers to *want* to make these demands. Yes, I truly believe that correlation of high-school subjects must be a one-sided game until we have done more than we have at present toward making students

and teachers want to travel together from one high-school class to another.

At University High School, Urbana, Illinois, we teach a survey course in English literature to our third-year English students. We use as our text, *A Study of the Types of English Literature,* by Mabel Irene Rich. Those of you who are familiar with the book recall that the author does not include in her prose selections any specimens of biographical material. Feeling that this omission is a serious one, Professor H. G. Paul, Supervisor of English at University High School, suggested that I devise a six or eight weeks' course in biography as a unit in the junior English work. It occurred to me immediately that such a course would provide an excellent opportunity for me to put into practice my theory in regard to correlation. I felt sure that in the field of biography I should find material which would bring together in the English classroom interests from all departments in high school. I became hopeful that through a study of the careers of successful men and women, students might be led to discover their own abilities and to idealize traits of character that must be constant requisites for success in any chosen vocation.

Directing students in the reading of biography was a new experience for me; consequently I began with the basic problem, the selection of aims. I listed these as: enjoyment, character appreciation, inspiration toward some worthy expression of self, breadth of vision, a certain store of social, economic, and political information, and an appreciation of effective styles of expression. I decided to use Miss Rich's general method of study which consists of a survey of the origin and development of each type gained by tracing it through the great chronological periods of English literature; an appreciation of the defining characteristics of the type gained through an intensive study of a few specimens of it; and a general familiarity with the type gained through extensive reading as suggested by reference lists.

The detailed story of how I developed and enriched each phase of this general method will appear in the December *Bulletin* published by the Illinois Association of Teachers of English. I shall mention here only a few of the details that seem most pertinent to the theme of correlation. Tracing the origin and development of

biography as a type took the students to their books of ancient, medieval, and modern history, to their Bibles, and to their books of mythology. I tried to give point to the extensive reading of biographies and, incidentally, to motivate the students to this phase of the course by using as a guide a quotation from Bacon's "Of Studies": "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested." We defined the terms of the definition as we thought Bacon would have defined them and then went to the high-school library for one week of laboratory "tasting." One of our practice teachers had prepared shelves of biography books in the library in such a way that each shelf contained specimens of various kinds of biographical material. Considering individual preferences as far as she was able to determine them, she assigned two or three students to a shelf with the instructions that each was to "taste" the books on his shelf according to the direction sheets which she distributed. It was a pleasant laboratory week of browsing and note-taking. In this way interests from all classrooms were brought together. Chemist, engineer, statesman, economist, poet, and novelist, one after the other, demanded the student's individual attention. Reports from teachers showed that echoes from the library went back to the classrooms in a profitable way.

At the close of the week, I asked each student to name the book which had "tasted" best to him. The book which he named became his to "swallow" in preparation for a special report before the class. However, the "swallowing," I explained, must be accompanied by the "chewing" of all other material which our library afforded upon the chosen subject. There were many opportunities throughout the project for aid from librarian and teachers—teachers of all departments in high school.

Our intensive reading was based upon the text *Modern Pioneers* by Scarlet and Cohen. We read and discussed the subject matter in the comparatively formal recitation manner. We compared the various subjects of biography in regard to ability to overcome obstacles, ability to find the right place, and ability to find pleasure and satisfaction in service. We picked out traits of character that have made people pioneers. We concluded that in the case of biography, a reader's reflection usually leads him to say to himself:

"This man or woman found his place in life." This leads in turn to: "What will my place be?" At this point one of the students brought from the history class a *Weekly News Review* for March 30, 1931, from which he had been reading current events. This gave the editorial, "Ten Vocational Points," which we used as a start in a week's study of vocations. Outside of class each student read a vocational book from our library. During the class hours we listened to reports upon these books; we chatted together about the things we should like to do; we analyzed the general and specific helps that each of our high-school subjects was giving us in the acquiring of information and culture necessary to success. I hope the time spent upon the study of vocations did afford the students some inspiration toward a worthy expression of self.

I brought the study of biography to a close quite confident that in our survey of the lives of great men and women from all fields of service we had made a contribution to the cause of correlation.

Biography gave me a motive for going with my students to their other classrooms. This fall at University High School we have been working upon a plan to motivate other teachers to lead the students back to the English classrooms. We have put a better English campaign into operation. The plan, itself, when stripped of motivation trappings is nothing new or original. It is at base the oldtime minimum essential list that we all know perhaps too well.

Early this fall Professor Paul asked Miss Jacoby and me, as teachers of the second-year English work in our high school, to direct our classes in planning a better English campaign—one that would continue throughout the year. He gave us copies of the chapter, "Co-operation in Learning English," from his new *Essentials of English for the High School.* We read the chapter ourselves and gave it to the students to read. We discussed it in the English periods, emphasizing the responsibilities, the previous failures, and the possibilities for service to the school. When we reached the question, "Shouldn't you like to start a campaign for improving the use of English in every class in the school?" we decided that the final answer should come from the entire sophomore class assembled in formal meeting. The class president called the meeting and presided. In one hour's time the class put through much new business.

They voted to accept the responsibility of the campaign; they appointed their president as a committee of one to call upon Mr. Williams, Principal of University High School, to ask for his approval; they chose one of the boys to appear in the next teacher's meeting in order to explain the plan to the teachers and to invite their co-operation; they decided in general upon five objectives for the semester: spelling, pronunciation, grammar, topical recitation, and correct form in all written papers; they appointed committees to enlarge upon each of these objectives, a committee for publicity, and another for an assembly.

With this meeting out of the way, real work began. The class president gained Mr. Williams' approval of the scheme. The committees held meetings, drew up plans for minimum requirements, and presented these to their class president. In the English classes we wrote articles aiming to motivate the student body to better English. We chose an official slogan for the campaign. In the art room a few worthwhile posters were made and a linoleum block cut as an official stamp. Finally a definite plan came into being, and the representative of the class presented it to the faculty for their approval, incidentally making a very creditable plea for their co-operation. At the next school assembly each student received a mimeographed copy of the plan.

In fairness to the faculty I should say that in response to an inspirational talk by Professor Paul they had voted previously to make better English one of their objectives for the year. They were in a receptive mood when the time came for them to begin putting the plan into action. They agreed not to discount in all departments the grades of students who fail to master the minimum essentials, but to report offenders to their English teachers at the end of each six weeks. The English grades are to suffer.

You must know that our essentials are few in number. We hope that by the end of this semester, every student in our high school will have mastered the pronunciation of five words, the spelling of ten words, the principal parts of five verbs, and the correct form of written papers; and that he will have acquired a certain ability in and desire for the topical recitation. We have chosen a few objectives, and we are hammering them constantly.

Our publicity committee is busy. Every week they visit each teacher to talk over the campaign and to give her new bulletin-board material. Secret detectives are on duty watching for offenders. There are spelling lessons in the mathematics classes. English teachers are really visiting the other classrooms. The assembly committee is working toward an all-school assembly to be given after the Thanksgiving vacation. Teachers throughout the building are enjoying the neatness and the uniformity of written papers. Our campaign for better English is far from ambitious. This semester we are interested in the spirit of co-operation which we hope will carry on to bigger things later on.

I have hoped in this paper to develop a two-fold theory of correlation. Let us in our English classes use for a part of our time subject matter pertinent to other departments in high school and let us motivate teachers from the other departments to respect a few minimum essentials in English. Let us do these things hopeful that in time all our efforts at correlation will be directed by a spirit of "I want to."

I DID NOT KNOW

TERESA M. STANTON

I did not know that flower-scented dusk
Beneath blue starlit skies could bring again
The kindness of your voice, your smile, your touch,
And with them, haunting requiems of pain.

I did not know that skies could be so grey,
That brilliant flowers could grow so dull in hue,
That songs would be low cadences of pain.
All happiness and beauty went with you.

UNLIKE BEATRICE—

EDNA GOEDEN

Must I then be a Beatrice to you—
Walk stately in my beauty like a nun
Who shrouds her body from the worldling's view?
And must I sit and watch the days that run
Like sand between my fingers while you sing
Pale songs which time shall temper to a glow
That like gold halos to my name shall cling,
Making immortal, love I did not know?
Behold, the Dante of the world's acclaim
A thousand years is dead and gone from here—
And what think you he reckons now of fame,
Or what of Beatrice, the once so dear?
What is the glory of the world to this—
The poignant moment of a mortal kiss?

ROUND TABLE

LET THEM TALK!

Written reports on collateral reading, done by high-school students, have been featured during the past few years. Card files, booklets, report blanks, and similar worthy devices have been recommended by individuals and publishing houses as quick and effective means of handling this phase of English work. As a result, clever Mary reads *Half Hours* by Barrie and fills in the blank spaces of some report form but gets no chance to try to impersonate any of the actors, read aloud bits of humor, or share other "finds." Also exceptional John devours *All Quiet on the Western Front* and *The Road Back* by Remarque and confides to the teacher, as he records the titles and author on his personal card in the files, that they are awful books—just the thing all boys would enjoy if they knew about them.

Mary and John need an opportunity to "give and take"—to exchange ideas, to express reactions—not only with each other but also with all the Sues and the Jims of the class. When it involves more than individual enjoyment, ending with himself or herself, collateral reading assumes to the student a deeper meaning. *A Lantern in Her Hand* by Aldrich is more than "just another story" if Mary is to present it to her classmates. It becomes a plot of high idealism, full of the atmosphere of pioneer days. Sturdily and heroically Abbie Deal moves through the pages. Convincingly Mary carries the group with her. When it is finished, the Sues, especially, are sure that they must read not only this book but also Aldrich's latest, *A White Bird Flying*. Mary also brings *Jalna* by Mazo de La Roche to class. Under the influence of her rather skilful tongue, the *Whiteoaks* become alive. Grandmother dozes, wakes, devours food and attention; Renny stands a towering strength which commands the admiration of the whole family; Finck cringes, gropes blindly—caught in adolescent impulses—and pours his soul out in music.

"Did you say that there are other books about them?" whispers Sue as Mary finishes. And thus not only *Jalna* but also *Whiteoaks of Jalna*, and *Finch's Fortune* start the rounds of the class.

John contributes *Trader Horn* by Horn and Lewis and *The Heart of Black Papua* by Taylor. Strange animals, inhuman beings, unfamiliar customs, breath-taking adventure—all are thrown on an imaginary screen

before the group. Catching a glimpse of the treat John has had, sleepy-eyed, backward Jim decides that such reading is not bad after all.

Once a month, every two months—or as often as the teacher sees fit—there should be a regular class period devoted to a recitation of this nature. Then Mary and John present comprehensively, thought provokingly, challengingly, the things they have read and Sue and Jim get a vision of the joy in collateral reading. (Usually after a few meetings, the latter group is also able to add to the discussion.)

Of course Mary's and John's oral reports are not impromptu. An educative process, the success of which depends primarily upon the efforts of the teacher and the librarian, is necessarily back of the actual reports. The first step toward the goal is a varied reading list—biography, drama, poetry, fiction, etc. The second is concrete suggestions to be used by the student as he reads and as he prepares to present his book to the group.

MABEL LIPPARD

BOYDEN HIGH SCHOOL
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THE REVIEWER REPLIES[1]

Miss Gambill's contention that Dr. Morrison did not have the responsibility of considering goals, in a text on method, raises a fundamental issue. If the problems of method are independent of the determination of aims, criticism of method cannot derive from a theory of aims. On the other hand, if method is fundamentally conditioned by aims, telic considerations are primary in the scientific criticism of method.

No important writer in the field of educational method, certainly not Dr. Morrison himself, accepts the view that sound technique can be arrived at without a definition of the goal to be sought. The distinction between an understanding and an appreciation rests upon assumptions which are essentially psychological and sociological. The chapter on the education of character, in *The Practice of Teaching*, contains an extensive preliminary discussion as to what constitutes good character. The unit-mastery idea itself takes its form from a philosophy of the nature of personality and the relation of the educative process to personality. Clearly Dr. Morrison has taken the sound view that educational method depends di-

[1] A reply to Miss Gambill's criticism of a review of Dr. Henry C. Morrison's *The Practice of Teaching in Secondary Schools* (rev. ed.) which appeared in this magazine, September, 1931. Miss Gambill's criticism was published in the "Round Table" in the preceding issue.—EDITOR.

rectly upon a broad conception of the materials and objectives of education.

As a good Morrisonian, Miss Gambill will concede, upon mature thought, that an evaluation of goals is within the scope of the book on method. If arithmetic is to be taught for its disciplinary effects, or to provide intellectual play, or to afford a way of viewing the quantitative aspects of our environment, or to aid the learner in performing the normal life-activities involving the manipulation of number, or perhaps a composite of all these, the procedure will be different than when the aim is to produce a number of "understandings." Again, if grammar has a value independent of its contribution to language accuracy, the method will be different than when grammar is regarded as an aid in the improvement of expression. In fact, one cannot write a paragraph on educational method, much less a book, without revealing a viewpoint, or scrambling of viewpoints, about what constitutes a desirable outcome. Method and materials are correlative aspects of a unitary process which must take its direction from clearly conceived goals.

The limitations of Dr. Morrison's book are found, not in the absence of goals, but in the inadequacy of the goals proposed. The ultimate objectives of teaching are to be found in the life-processes themselves, not in the eventual mastery of abilities which may or may not form important elements in normal living. The unit-mastery plan seeks outcomes which are to result from pupil activities; it does not seek the goal of education in the activities themselves. Thus a child's efforts at spontaneous creative writing, according to this view, are significant educationally, not as an experience which gives meaning to the child's present living, and which therefore is an end in itself; but as an activity which, when repeated often enough, will result in certain appreciations or skills which the school calls good. When these appreciations have been mastered, they are utilized in the development of others just ahead. Dr. Morrison is dealing in futures. According to this scheme, the child is not really ready to live until he reaches the end of the secondary-school period. Until then he is just preparing to live. After that he happily returns to the condition of normality which he had not enjoyed since the days he learned the complex activities of locomotion, speech, courtesy, obedience, and care-free play—without pre-tests, guide sheets, mastery tests, and all!

Consider, then, what happens when, in this new-found state of normality, some historian presents disturbing evidence to discredit accepted notions concerning the underlying causes of the American Revolution, or a physicist casts doubt upon the law of gravitation or the wave theory of light, or a biographer exposes the private life of a national hero. What

becomes of those cherished understandings or appreciations mastered by the approved learning cycle? The endless processes of revision in every major field of human knowledge require plasticity of mind and a maximum capacity for readjustment that has not been anticipated in a program of unit-mastery. If the unit plan makes for complacency in the school period, it provides sufficient compensation in the form of a "nervous régime" when the individual discovers that life is not static but constantly changing.

That the Morrison plan is superior to the traditional recitation is true, but that is of course no sufficient answer. American education cannot rest content until it teaches children how to live abundantly in the here and now, under conditions conducive to growth. It will increasingly provide the children with opportunities for larger social vision, appreciative awareness of scientific advances, and abiding interests in the welfare of human civilization.

There is no opportunity here to elaborate upon the very real dangers inherent in the artificial distinction between appreciation-type and science-type learnings.[2] It is sufficient to say that the doctrine conduces to sentimentality in literature and to the divorce of conscience and reason in the social sciences. In the realm of modern social, economic, and political problems it gives rise to the mediocre and docile type of citizenship to which I referred in my review.

Miss Gambill's question dealing with economy through generalization and the use of language symbols implies a too narrow definition of the term "activity." Since generalization and vicarious learning through language symbols may be vital experiences when properly conditioned, both belong to an enriched program of activities. But when we make the processes of life itself ancillary to the attainment of "learning-products" which do not improve the current, normal responses of the learner to the world in which he moves, we are exalting subject matter over personality.

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INDIANS AS THEY ARE

On the western side of the northeastern corner of Arizona three long narrow plateaus rise like a trio of thick fingers pointing south, a landmark to the traveler and a diversion from the monotony of wide spreading

[2] See "Teaching Literature for Enjoyment," *English Journal*, April, 1931, for a more extensive discussion of this matter.

plains. The plains are the spacious roaming and hunting grounds of the seminomadic Navahos with their herds of ponies and flocks of sheep and goats. The mesas are the lofty but restricted perches of the Hopis, clustered so compactly in their snug adobe quarters that they have quite an urban effect of living in apartment houses. From these scenic villages—three each, running tit-tat-to along the first two flat strips, and the larger Oraibi monopolizing the third—the farmers commute to their corn fields, peach orchards, and vegetable gardens below. For arts and crafts the Hopis make baskets and pottery; the Navahos weave blankets and fashion silver-and-turquoise jewelry; and for religion and recreation they dance and sing and exult in beauty forever.

As a picturesque and romantic figure the American Aborigine has been familiar to us from the days of Cooper and his Leather-stocking, but a more realistic and genuine report is a recent product. After George Philip Krapp's volumes in his "American History for Children" series came Oliver LaFarge's *Laughing Boy* for grown-ups, and then the present deluge.[3]

Mrs. "White Mountain" Smith, wife of the chief ranger in that territory, has lived among the mesa people long and intimately enough to speak with authority of the inner scene, and she does so with intelligent sympathy. She relates the biography of Polamana, "the Butterfly Girl of Hopi Land," who represents the problem of the Indian inappropriately educated in a government school and then returned to her native haunts; forced back into the primitive existence for which she has been spoiled by a thin smattering of culture, yet unable to make a practical application even of the superficial knowledge and training she has acquired.

The book[4] is an absorbing narrative, simply told and shaped toward a happy ending through a constructive policy. The truth of its substance is verified by a real Hopi maid who has been through the mill; and the soundness of its viewpoint is vouched for by the Secretary of the Interior, who is right now advocating and instituting the reform the desirability of which is skilfully dramatized in this typical but individualized modern instance.

By a coincidence significant of the present trend, Mrs. Armer's *Waterless Mountain*[5] is at once a contemporary and companion piece of Mrs. Smith's *Hopi Girl,* for it is the biography of a Navaho boy. Although designed for youthful readers (prize-winner in the Juvenile Fiction Contest)

[3] Linderman's *American* and *Old Man Coyote* are not discussed here, because they present the Indians of the Northwest, who are notably different.

[4] *Hopi Girl.* By Dama Margaret Smith. Stanford University Press, 1931.

[5] Published by Longmans, Green, 1931.

and therefore pure story with no thesis, it has the same charm of simplicity and vivid reality. More like LaFarge's *Laughing Boy* in that respect, it is entertaining and incidentally instructive. The volume is beautifully illustrated—the locality evidently being the marvelous Cañon de Chelly—and is dedicated to one who richly deserves that recognition, the influential trader Lorenzo Hubbell, who, like his father before him, means to the Indians a wise, generous, and much-needed friend.

Navahos again are the theme of the Coolidge book,[6] but their bulkier tome is descriptive and historical, containing authentic information about the whole tribe, enhanced by good photographs.

Mr. Applegate's collection of short stories[7] is charged with humor, not to say rollicking mirth, for he stresses the merry side of this barbaric life, and turns some barbed shafts of wit against the smug and stupid white man, whose "civilization" is less superior to the red man's than he likes to think. One delightful incident follows another: the ingenuous correspondence of Tabo Salukana with the Big Chiefs at Washington about his precious eaglet stolen by a bad Navaho; the Arizona version of *The Rivals* in the amusing case of Ta Ah and Dawa Mana; the sad encounter of the visiting foreign artists and the sacred Hopi snakes; the malicious spoofing of the enterprising lady writer by Ago Po, the jester of San Ildefonso; the whimsical dismay of these devout pagans who were also good Catholics when their new god played a wicked joke on them. The book is gayly illustrated with drawings from original Indian paintings.

All these accounts agree in the impression of our native "savages" as people of a strict code of conduct and a quick response to all loveliness. The keynote of their philosophy is sounded in the Navaho maxim—"He who creates beauty never tires."

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CREATIVE WRITING AND MUSIC

In composition writing, as in all forms of aesthetic activity, the desire is parent to the act. The precise character of that desire is of secondary consequence; but that it be there, struggling to free itself, is of infinite significance. Without this pressing urge to say something, our students will never say anything, be they ever so well equipped with the means of

[6] *The Navajo Indians.* By Dane and Mary Coolidge. Houghton Mifflin, 1930.

[7] *Indian Stories from the Pueblos.* By Frank Applegate. Lippincott, 1929.

saying it. There will, undoubtedly, be little value for humanity as a whole in their adolescent mutterings. But to them and to us it is of no slight consideration. For, given time and care, this muttering will grow to a grumbling, and the grumbling to a mighty rumbling, and it will be listened to and understood.

It is suggested that the quality of our compositions can be raised by making the preparatory lessons grist for the aesthetic mill. Merely to assign a topic to be written the next day is not sufficient. To explain in detail what is expected is likewise a partial procedure. Great artists do not create on being notified to do so. And our students, when they write, are essentially artists. Before they can write with any degree of force and originality, they must have an experience which demands to be expressed, and which seems worth expressing. The fresher, the more vital, that experience, the more complete and emphatic will its expression be, and the keener will be the pleasure of the reader.

In an attempt to point out that vivid experiences tend to result in vivid writing, the following experiment was tried. The class, high-school Sophomores, was told to appear in the music room after school. The exact nature of what was to take place was not disclosed. When all the students were seated so that no communication among them was possible, paper was distributed, and each student instructed to write his reactions in full to any piece of music that impressed him. No specific reactions were made mandatory. Whatever expression seemed most urgently seeking to free itself was the preferable one. The following pieces were then played:

"La Cinquantaine"—Gabriel Marie
Opening Bars of Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*
"The Ride of the Valkyrie"—Wagner
"Amaryllis"—Louis XIII
"Minuet"—Gossec
"In a Persian Market Place"—Keteldey
"The Loom of Omphale"—Saint-Saëns
"Song of India"—Rimsky-Korsakoff
"Solvejg Song"—Grieg
"Meditation"—Bach

These selections were not played *in toto*. The piano was used instead of the phonograph or orchestra. Intervals were allowed between the playing of the selections so that notes might be taken, and so that the various moods might not clash too unbearably. Absolute silence was demanded during these intervals. No comments were made as to the possible meaning of the music.

Only one purpose was uppermost in the mind, to note the efficacy of music in arousing the pupils to a pitch of feeling, definite and potent enough to evoke whatever literary capacities were present. The music was not regarded as an end in itself. No attempt was made to engender a finer appreciation of this art. Whatever purpose the music served lay in its capacity to act as a stimulus to thought and feeling. Those to whom music is a consuming passion may carp at this desecration of their muse, but the end here seemed to justify the means. The following are culled from the student compositions written immediately after the music had been played:

"Yesterday as I sat and listened to that first selection I realized how beautiful my youth was, and I wished that I never had to grow old and leave this lovely world. . . . . That first song reached down deep into my yet young heart."

"It brought a sense of breathlessness, of suffocation—I was alone—It was twilight. The sun had just sunk behind the horizon, but its rays still filtered through the branches."

"As I listen to the music, I can see a train of camels ridden by white robed Arabs, moving slowly and silently across the vast expanse of sand. The purple shadows deepen, and the forms become less distinct, until they are merely dark blurs against a deep purple mist. A cloak of silence and restful peace envelops me, and the breathless solemnity of nightfall in the lonely desert overtakes me."

"As it [the music] is played the following scene is enacted. Dusk is settling over the market place. Then, as the sun, a fiery red ball falls behind the horizon, the last stragglers listening to the cries of the vendors drift away. The market place is deserted."

"A great cliff, and at the bottom, a quiet sea. The only living being was a gull, soaring near the brink of the precipice, now and then uttering a hoarse, discordant shriek."

I am not maintaining that the above samples are instances of imperishable prose. But they are unequivocally indicative of quite sincere and sometimes effective groping for words to express that internal turbulence which precedes all artistic creation. These students were moved and they enjoyed it—so much so, that they clamored for another such lesson as they called it.

This experiment thus contained the three most vital elements necessary to good writing: the aroused organic state, the desire to communicate, and the joy in communicating. It is my contention that these results are illustrative of what can be done if the classroom preparation becomes itself a part in the process of creation.

ABRAHAM H. LASS

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STAR-GAZING AND THE CLASSICS

Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? . . . . or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?—Book of Job.

Back in my own balmy high-school days, when teaching as a vocation was yet as remote from my mind as polar exploration, I stumbled, quite by chance, upon a book which caused me to become permanently interested in the starry heavens. *The Friendly Stars,* by Martha Evans Martin, is doubtless antiquated now, since scientific books are so soon cast on the scrap-heap; but when the century and I were in the teens, this volume and its companion book, *The Ways of the Planets,* kindled my imagination until I read everything else obtainable on the subject of astronomy. Fortunately I lived in the country, where no arc-lights dimmed the beauty of the stars; and without formal instruction I taught myself to identify every first-magnitude star and every important constellation visible in the Northern Hemisphere.

A few years later, as a teacher, I found the stars faithful allies. When my first fifth-graders read in Stevenson of

> The Dog and the Bear and the Hunter and all,
> And the star of the sailor, and Mars,

as an experiment I tried sketching on the blackboard Orion with his sword and belt, and with the Great Dog, Sirius, at his heels. It was easy to see that the mythological tale was entertaining enough; so in addition I specified the section of sky in which the constellation might be observed that November evening if the weather were clear. For the remainder of the class period the children and I chatted of the Great Dipper and the quaint fact that of old it was considered to resemble a bear with a very long tail; of "the star of the sailor," the North Star; and of Mars, the friendly red planet, which might that evening be seen glowing like a little flame above the eastern horizon shortly after dark. The children had never before heard that stars had names—or colors! That night they were able to recognize a few stars—or thought they were—and next day were anxious for more information.

For several years now I have taught not fifth-grade subjects but high-school English; but never a class has been mine that did not thrill to the mere suggestion of the mysteries of the universe. From being merely a collection of meaningless words, astronomical allusions in poetry take on new light with a little explanation, and poetic appreciation becomes often spontaneous. When our juniors read Tennyson's "Locksley Hall," in

which the Pleiades are likened to "a swarm of fireflies tangled in a silver braid" or the lines from Poe's "Israfel,"

> And the rapid Pleiads even
> (Which are seven),

why should they not know when and where to look for the Seven Sisters and learn the cause for the glamour that surrounds them, giving them an interest all out of proportion to their size and conspicuousness as a constellation? Why should not our pupils know that each Pleiad is itself a huge sun, and that Tennyson's mystic glimmer emanates from great nebulous bands stretching from star to star and enveloping them, totally unlike anything in our own solar system?

Poets of all ages have appreciated the singularly beautiful spectacle of Venus hung like a huge jewel low in the western sky, for with the exception of the sun and the moon it is the brightest and loveliest thing in the heavens. Shakespeare, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* refers to it variously as "yonder Venus in her glimmering sphere," "the Venus of the sky," and "Aurora's harbinger." To Milton it is "the star that bids the shepherd fold"; to William Blake, a "fair-haired angel of the evening"; and to Tennyson, the earth's "silver sister-world."

The Zodiac and its signs are constantly reappearing in poetry. A good time to give students a superficial introduction to them is during the study of the priceless "Prologue" to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales.*

> . . . . And the yonge sonne
> Hath in the Ram his halfe cours y-ronne,

remarks the immortal Geoffrey. This reference may lead to the students' acquaintance with the signs of the Zodiac. The rhyme beginning

> The Ram, the Bull, the Heavenly Twins

is helpful.

A few other astronomical allusions, chosen at random from classics commonly used in high school, are:

The passage in Coleridge's *The Ancient Mariner* mentioning "one bright star within the nether tip" of the crescent moon. Every boy and girl should know why this condition could not possibly exist.

Brutus' remark to Lucius (*Julius Caesar,* Act II, scene I), "I can not by the progress of the stars give guess how near to day."

Milton's references to the constellations in "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," particularly the one to Cassiopeia,

> . . . . that starred Ethiope queen, who strove
> To set her beauty's praise above
> The sea-nymphs . . . .

Addison's *Hymn* beginning

> The spacious firmament on high

and representing the celestial bodies as

> Forever singing as they shine,
> "The hand that made us is divine."

Emerson, in his oft-quoted essay *Self-Reliance,* philosophizes on the helplessness of civilized man.

> He has got a fine Geneva watch, but he has lost the skill to tell the hour by the sun. A Greenwich nautical almanac he has . . . . but the man on the street does not know a star in the sky.

Many a high-school student has never heard of determining time by the stars. Brutus' method of telling time is at least worthy of mention.

References to the heavens in literature are almost as numberless as the stars themselves, and it would be futile even to attempt to enumerate them. Naturally any explanation of things astronomical must be made in a manner consistent with good English teaching; for the fact that English and not astronomy is being taught must be always in the foreground. Students who show interest in the heavens should be encouraged to use the libraries. An otherwise colorless English recitation may often be transformed into an animated discussion, however, if the teacher can cast even a ray of light on some allusion that would otherwise be but a jumble of words, words, words.

SALIBELLE ROYSTER

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MAKING PUNCTUATION VITAL

Our English twelve classes needed to be jarred into giving attention to the proper use of punctuation marks. The ordinary review and working out of exercises suggested no appeal. This was the way we became interested this year:

The question before us was: Of what use is punctuation anyway? On the board was copied Ralph Royster Doyster's famous letter to his lady-love as it was meant to be, and opposite it was copied the letter written as he sent it (Mary Ryan's *English Review Exercises,* p. 116). We clearly saw the necessity of proper punctuation in that, for Ralph's "sprinkling in" of marks certainly gave occasion for the lady's offense.

The classes' chief punctuation errors, ascertained through a standard diagnostic test, were explained in class, and hectographed copies of sen-

tences for practice in applying these uses were given for study. (Pupils with high scores were exempted from this.) Along with these studies were given copies of a letter written by teacher to pupil, which was to be read and considered outside of class. This letter brought forth interesting response. In it the chief rules for marks of punctuation were illustrated, and each pupil tried to satisfy himself as to why each mark was used. This led to a consideration of the principal rules, and criticisms were challenged in class discussion. The return letters were extremely interesting, for they too employed many uses of punctuation marks—and, for the most part, they really "talked." We are sure some pupils obtained a new vision of this "bugbear," and this bit of mechanics is not neglected in the way it had been heretofore.

A COPY OF THE LETTER

STAMBAUGH, MICH.
November 18, 1931

MY DEAR PUPIL:

Although these are hectographed letters, I am talking to each one of you individually. When you shall have read this, you perhaps will say, "Letters! This isn't much like a letter!" Yes, this is a letter—it has a heading and a salutation, you see—and I want you to read it through very carefully. I'll tell you why at the end of the letter.

English—I mean the course we are supposed to offer in high school—is like mince pie; you can put almost anything in it and it tastes all right, providing that the ingredients are digestible. "That's not a very good simile," someone says. You are right—it isn't. Onions, garlic, peppermint, and cod-liver oil are digestible (for most people), but they certainly would spoil a mince pie for all of us, if added to it; and surely many things that might be added to the English course would entirely spoil it too.

The point I wanted to make is that English, as we have been doling it out to you, consists of many ingredients. (Yes, I know some have been quite indigestible for most of you; for instance, those dissertations on present-day poetry I asked you to write.) Look at the list of things you are asked to "swallow" for English: getting the meaning out of what you read; applying ideas obtained to those you already have; giving clear expression, written or oral, to thoughts you are thinking; writing papers (you dislike the word themes, do you not?); taking diagnostic tests; studying sentence-structure, grammar, punctuation, spelling—all such mechanics; making vocabulary studies (by the way, are you keeping this up?); talking with ease before a group.

I could probably enumerate many more, but I don't want you to become overwhelmed and say you have no "appetite" for any of it. I often wonder which ingredient each of you prefers, and sometimes I wonder whether you are really taking into your system any of these.

Well, this week I want you to assimilate punctuation in such a way that from now on and forever afterwards your written expressions will be exceedingly clear to the reader because you know what marks of punctuation to use to bring out the interpretation you desire your reader to get.

Why should you, who want to get at some real studying, read this letter carefully? Because, in it I have illustrated all of the important uses of marks of punctuation (Woolley's Text, pp. 170–220). Can you explain all of these I have used? Did these marks help my letter to "talk" to you? Now I want you to talk to me by letter—a letter to be in by December 7th.

Very "punctuationally" yours,

ALICE L. PEARSON

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STAMBAUGH, MICHIGAN

ENGLISH FOR PLEASURE

"Come on, Slim, or we'll be late to English 'n' have to stay the very first day 'n' write an extra theme. Theme! Only the gods know how I hate that word! I have, ever since I had to grind one out on a certain subject each Friday when I was a Freshie. Wonder what this new teacher's like? Alton, is that her name? Come on. Might as well get this dirty job over," Tom called to his chum as the eight-thirty gong sounded.

"Bought your *Ivanhoe* yet, Tom? I haven't either. S'pose she'll be like the rest of 'em and jump on a guy for not having a book even before she tells him to get it. She'll probably say sophomores ought to know the course of study. How John hated *Ivanhoe!* Says he couldn't get through the first chapter. He's flunked it twice. Finally he got a pass in English on condition that he make up *Ivanhoe*. Somebody was big-hearted! Who was that gink, Ivanhoe, anyway, that he has the right to cause so much grief? Bonar fixed John's schedule so he can come into our section when we study *Ivanhoe,*" confided Slim. The two boys passed down the hall and disappeared into a recitation room.

The principal, James Harding Bonar, knitted his brows. He had overheard the boys' conversation. As he thought the matter over, he wondered why any boy should fail on *Ivanhoe*. "English is a subject everyone should enjoy—reading and writing. There really should be no failures in it," he mused, while approaching his office.

A month later Mr. Bonar found himself facing John Arthur and Tom Perkins. Tom, as manager of the football team, had come to get the report on eligibility of the members of the team.

"John, are you getting *Ivanhoe* this time, or is *Ivanhoe* going to get

you again?" asked Mr. Bonar. He scanned the eligibility marks. "An E, John, in English! Good for you! I thought you could."

"No fault o' mine, Mr. Bonar. You see Miss Alton's different. She's sort o' human. All of her pupils like English. Can't help it! We're treated as if we're individuals with some judgment. I'm not reading *Ivanhoe*. I chose *Westward Ho!* Tom's group is reading *The Crisis*. Nobody wanted *Ivanhoe,*" John added in disdain. "We all said we'd heard nothing but *Ivanhoe, Ivanhoe, Ivanhoe* for years, until we hated the word. But some day, now that I don't need to do it, I'm going to read that book."

"But aren't you two fellows in the same class? I don't understand," said Mr. Bonar.

"Well, it's this way. We voted on a list of books Miss Alton showed us. She read a little from each one. Then we were asked to give them the once over and be ready to vote later. So we're reading something we like. At least if we don't, we did the pickin'. I surely was surprised to find I had a chance to get in at the pearly gates without having read *Ivanhoe*. I've always thought I'd be classed among the uncultured common herd if I didn't read *Ivanhoe*. Not that I cared particularly. We're using four books in our class. I want to read 'em all and then some. Mr. Bonar, that teacher makes us kids feel that our opinions count. No high-hat about her! She knows her stuff, too. She can answer any question about 'most any book. I wish I knew as much as she does. S'pose she learned it writing and reading," explained Tom.

"Frankly, boys, I'm interested in that class. I'll drop in one of these days," Mr. Bonar responded.

"Come to-morrow," John urged. "We'll talk about questions given beforehand to set us thinking. Our group's going over big tomorrow on *Westward Ho!*, Mr. Bonar."

"It's not half as good as *The Crisis*, though. Come in and see for yourself. Other terms, we chose a book rather blindly for outside reading, and had to write a book-review. After trying to answer a lot of dumb questions, I'd swear never to read another book," said Tom. "The questions were the same both terms. The fellows say they're the same all four years. Once a teacher made us give oral reports to her privately. I thought I'd pass out standing by a table in the hall trying to give her my report. I burned the book when that ordeal was over. Such stunts make youngsters hate to read. I enjoy discussing a book with others who have read it, don't you? This term we talk about the books quite informally—swap stories—you know what I mean. A fellow gets a chance this way to hear all the stories. Can't copy an old book report, either. Miss Alton doesn't

have the whole story re-hashed in class. Instead a fellow must think. She asks the whys and wherefores, and wants to know our opinions. Before we know it, we all want to read all the books mentioned. We're even allowed to suggest books. She's a K.O. when it comes to teaching English. We don't tear every story to pieces, and wear the story out, as well as ourselves, hunting figures of speech. When you read, you read for pleasure, don't you, Mr. Bonar? We're doing that, too. Miss Alton doesn't razz us to death if we happen to choose a short book. I was surprised to find that good authors are actually living now. She's read us stories out of this month's magazines. I've even tried to write a story or two this term. Imagine that! They're no account, of course, but then they're mine! It's the first time I've ever been interested in English. Before this, English has been an uphill job for me."

"Come on. Let's get going. We're late for that football meeting. So long, Mr. Bonar! We'll be seeing you in English to-morrow!" said John.

"All right, boys," replied Mr. Bonar. "Thanks for the invitation. I'll be there without fail."

ELLEN F. BOYER

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EDITORIAL

Every first-class teacher of high-school English today has the problem of commenting upon "creative" writing which his students show him. Assuming that the chief value of creative writing in our schools is the reflex influence upon the writers rather than the worth of the product, the teacher will not apply rigidly the standards of adult literary criticism. He will seek rather to encourage the kinds of growth which the writers' personalities need.

Criticizing Creative Writing

For illustration, let us take this poem written by Anthony Petrosky, a high-school boy of Plymouth, Pennsylvania, in the heart of the hard coal region, where people of all nationalities live, and where stupid cruelty still lingers. It was sent in by Anthony's teacher, Leland M. Bennett.

SPORT

Look, Mister! that my dog, Sport,
He lay three day so still like dead.
Jezu! It mek me tink I'm hort
To see his eye so sad, so red.

Sport, he's old, he don' bite.
He like the kits, he like to play,
He nevair, nevair look for fight.
He's old, he's wise, he keep away.

He like to have you pat his head;
He lick your han', he is so glad.
And if you give him piece of bread
He almos' say "Thank you," by Gad!

My Sport, he is those kind dog
He's nevair hort no peoples,
But look, he's lay so still like log
Becos' he's meet some deevils.

One day He's go for get some meat
Or maybe jus' for walk.

He keep away from boys on street
Becos' they throw the rock.

Well, as I was say, one day he go,
What place? I don' know where.
He come back like you see him, so,
One beeg hole here, one beeg hole there.

By Gad! bad people do such thing
To shoot my leetle Sport
Somebody's neck for sure I wring
Or make them eat some dort.

I don' know why I'm feel so mad;
Sport never say noting.
He's just look sick and leetle sad
As eef he was crying.

He seemed to say, "Please don' get sore—
I soon will be all right.
I'm leetle wiser, no changed much more.
Sit don', don' please make fight."

By Gad, my Sport, he's not so dum;
He know that I love him.
Thos' other men, he mus' run from—
Not me, 'cos I love him.

We hope Mr. Bennett praised the boy's choice of subject matter near at hand, his actual observation of dogs, his sensitiveness to the speech he hears, his humane attitude. Isn't this much better than the usual imitative poems about beautiful trees, etc., or nostalgic imaginings of pretty scenes? Before commending too much his strong feeling of pity for his pet and his righteous indignation at the "deevils," it would be well to draw him into conversation about the dog—to see whether this is restrained expression of burning emotion or "worked up" expression of feeble feeling. A warm heart is God's chief delight; sentimentality is a vapor from the Pit.

There are halting lines, which the poet should be helped to find and correct by reading the poem aloud, or hearing the teacher read it. One doubts some of the dialect and might suggest that Anthony listen further for parallel forms.

The specific applications here may be wrong. The general principle of considering the writer more than the writing is certainly sound.

NEWS AND NOTES

NATIONAL SHAKESPEARE MEMORIAL CAMP

Plans are being made to conduct the first Shakespeare Memorial Camp in the lake-resort region of northern Michigan from June 25 to August 21, 1932. The summer camp is the first step in preparation for the first National Shakespeare Memorial Competition and Festival in Chicago in connection with the Centennial Celebration in 1933. College dramatic clubs and community theaters are urged to provide means for sending representatives to the camp. Those interested in further information concerning both the Memorial Camp and the Memorial Competition should write to Dr. Earl E. Fleischman, Drury College, Springfield, Missouri.

USEFUL DOCUMENTS

One Hundred and One Good Books. Selected by Alfred A. Kearn, Department of English, Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Lynchburg, Virginia. A list including English fiction, American fiction, biography, dramas, essays, and poetry. Not annotated. Free upon request.—*An Honors Course in English. A Suggestive Program.* By Myron McCurry, professor of English at Franklin College, Franklin, Indiana. A description of current practices in the organization of honors courses and proposals for further improvement.—*Winning Orations for a High School Contest.* Compiled by Lawrence M. Brings, president of Northwestern College of Speech Arts. Published by the Northwestern Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Student addresses that have won prizes in state, interstate, and national contests. *The Assembly in the Teachers College.* No. 1 of the "Trenton Studies in Education." By a Faculty Committee on Assembly Programs in the State Teachers College, Trenton, New Jersey. A report of questionnaire studies and recommendations relating to the chapel or assembly program in the teachers college.—*Industry.* By Mary Elizabeth Pidgeon. Bulletin 91 of the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor. A report of this bureau's researches of the conditions and problems of working women.—*Speech Defects and Their Correction.* By James Frederick Rogers, consultant in hygiene and specialist in Health Education. A scientific discussion of stammering and other speech defects from the point of view of the parent, teacher, and pupil. Published by the Office of Edu-

cation and available at the Office of the Superintendent of Documents at Washington, D.C. Price, 5 cents.—*Tales and Trails around the World: Building the International Mind through Toys. A Commencement Program for High School.* Material for the Observance of Washington's birthday. Pamphlets published by the Educational Department of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Pennsylvania Branch, 1924 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.—*Teacher Demand and Supply.* Research Bulletin of the National Education Association, Vol. IX, No. 5. Statistical material collected to reveal some of the major supply and demand problems and to stimulate further investigation in this field.—*Books for Youth.* Selected by C. J. Lynch and Sarah A. Beard. Brooklyn Public Library. Suggested readings for junior and senior high school pupils. Price, 5 cents.—*Practical Study Aids.* By C. Gilbert Wren. Stanford University Press. A pamphlet offering specific suggestions for methods of study for the college student.

THE GOAL

The English department of one of our large universities has set the following goal of preparation as the aim of the English departments of our secondary schools.

1. Has he anything of interest about which to write?
2. Can he organize for order and proportion?
4. Can he describe sharply enough to give a vivid impression?
5. Can he express an opinion or present an argument convincingly?
6. Can he explain a simple process clearly and economically?
7. Does he use his words accurately and can he spell them correctly when he does?
8. Does he write complete sentences and these only?
9. Is his writing free from grammatical errors in agreement, case of the pronoun, verb forms, use and placing of modifiers?
10. Does he punctuate consistently and with a reasonable degree of correctness?
11. Can and does he vary his sentence structure and use the complex and the compound sentence as well as the simple? Also the participial construction?
12. Does he avoid the sloppy "so" construction?
13. Does he have smooth connection between his sentences and can he secure variety by not always beginning with the subject followed by the verb?

14. Are his paragraphs unified and well-knit?

15. Does he know how to begin and end a composition?

16. Can he write correctly the forms of all ordinary business and social letters?

17. Can he write dialog correctly and distinguish between direct and indirect discourse?

THE PERIODICALS

"The Making of *The Scarlet Letter.*" By Julian Hawthorne. *The Bookman,* December, 1931. The general public has long displayed strong interest in the circumstances surrounding the writing of so famous a novel as Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter.* Although the book is pure fiction, Hawthorne received many inquiries from people who wished to know whether a "certain affair of fine red cloth" was for sale and for how much. Thus, although a specific statement is made in the Preface to *The House of the Seven Gables* that the house never had any concrete reality, there is in Salem today an edifice asserted to be the only real and original House of the Seven Gables. Generous offers have been made for the original manuscript of *The Scarlet Letter,* which in fact had been destroyed shortly after the type for the book had been set.

When Hawthorne lost his job as surveyor of the Salem custom house as a result of a Whig victory, he found himself with the necessary leisure—through the thrift of a good wife—for the writing of his great story. It was written under great emotional stress. Hawthorne's aged mother came at this time to live with her son; and during her long last illness Hawthorne moved in an atmosphere of gloom and anxiety, which explains in large measure the prevailing tone of this book.

Although all the characters of this book have been powerfully conceived and drawn, it is the child Pearl who stands out as the most remarkable. Hawthorne's own child, Una, who in this period has suggested a striking correspondence to the character of Pearl, may explain something of the vitality of this creation. Hawthorne himself reports in his diary that at a moment when he was looking at his dying mother, Una's voice came very clear and distinct into the chamber—"Yes, she is going to die." In another passage he says,

> But there is something that always strikes me about the child—I know not whether elfish or angelic, but at all events, supernatural. She seems at times to have little delicacy and anon shows the finest essence of it: now so hard, now so tender; now so perfectly unreasonable, soon again so wise. I now and then

catch an aspect of her in which I cannot believe her to be my own human child, but a spirit strangely mingled with good and evil haunting this house.

This reference to Una indicates rather definitely the source of Hawthorne's conception of little Pearl.

"Attaining Objectives in Composition." By Mrs. E. G. Gillidett. *Bulletin of the Kansas Association of Teachers of English,* December, 1931. Teaching composition to a slow group in a junior high school may be successful if the teacher draws from a wide range of life-situations to stimulate pupils' interest. The composition should be preceded by conversations about the outside interests and hobbies of children and by such class activities as the collection of pictures and sketches of mechanical contrivances which the pupils may have constructed. Pupils should be encouraged to explain to each other how they succeeded in making such instruments as radios, toy telephones, and model aeroplanes by means of simple and inexpensive materials. Similar situations can be devised for the girls, and the element of communication can be subordinated in the minds of the pupils to their real centers of interest. Written composition should be called for only when such an activity appears to be most natural or when it seems to be demanded by the circumstances. In any case, the objectives should be to teach the child to speak and to write in order to make his thoughts intelligible to his neighbors and to confront the learner with problems of social interest.

"Lytton Strachey." By Joseph Wood Krutch. *The Nation,* February 17, 1932. The career of Lytton Strachey is remarkable in that he accomplished a definitely conceived purpose as a biographer in a comparatively short period of time. Strachey set himself the difficult task of producing a new type of biography, wrote with the assurance of one who knows what he is achieving, and became established as a successful biographer with the publication of his second work, *Eminent Victorians.* Originator of the "new biography," he was free from the faults of many of his imitators. The thoroughness of his information contrasts sharply with the superficiality of knowledge of many of his followers, and his own deadly satire appears the more effective beside cruder criticism by lesser men of his school; and in the process of making biography interesting, he succeeded in avoiding mere invention and confined himself to the use or interpretation of the records. Strachey's power lay in his ability to select subjects and details which lent themselves readily to his purposes without distorting the truth.

"Our Homogeneous-Ability Grouping Confusion." By Warren W. Coxe. *Journal of Educational Research,* January, 1932. One of the chief reasons for disagreement on the question of pupil-sectioning is the failure to distinguish between "homogeneous" and "ability" grouping. "Homogeneous grouping" should be defined as an attempt to secure a greater refinement of pupil classification, while "ability grouping" should be regarded as a new kind of classification. Probably the chief value in the sectioning of pupils lies in the opportunity that ability grouping gives for the development of certain general abilities in which subject matter is regarded merely as a means. Efforts at improving achievement in standardized subject matter through homogeneous grouping have met with doubtful success.

"The Course in Freshman English." By Melvin Riggs. *Journal of Higher Education,* February, 1932. An experiment with sixty-five college students revealed that no real gain was made toward the elimination of errors in grammar and usage after the completion of a course in Freshman English under instructors possessing the requisite training, experience, and enthusiasm. In view of these results one wonders how effective the instruction in Freshman English may be in large universities when less favorable conditions obtain. Often the instructors are more interested in literature than in composition, and frequently college professors regard remedial work as outside the proper sphere of college instruction. Moreover, many teachers give a great deal of attention to the finer points of rhetoric when students are not learning even the essential language usages. Perhaps most important of all, however, is the fact that a passing mark is often given a student if he attends regularly, hands in written work on time, and is reasonably courteous. In view of the fact that a large percentage of college Freshmen do not attain to ninth-grade standards in English grammar and usage, formal course credits in Freshman English are not a reliable index of genuine accomplishment.

"The Influence of an Audience upon Recall." By Clarence Burri. *Journal of Educational Psychology,* December, 1931. Many observers report that the presence of others causes them difficulties of behavior, especially in speech and mnemonic responses. Students who are apparently unprepared frequently maintain that they have studied the required material but could not recall because others "were watching." In this experiment, undertaken to determine the effect of an audience upon recall, three groups of students acted as control and experimental groups. A list of fifteen pairs of words selected at random from a standard dictionary were

exposed by means of a hand-operated memory drum. In the test period each stimulus word was presented alone and in a different order. The result indicates that the efficiency of retention, measured in terms of recall, relearning, and stating, is greater for no audience. They indicate that any stimulus-response situation must be considered as a functional whole consisting of a constellation of numerous organismic and environmental factors. Any change in the situation will affect the synthesis of the whole.

It may be concluded from these results that if learning takes place privately, the presence of a group at the time of recall is detrimental to the efficiency of reproduction; also, the kind of audience is not very important as regards this influence on recall in the particular situation of this experiment. Finally, the anticipation of an audience for recall at the time of learning increases the learning time, although the amount remembered is less when recall occurs before an audience.

"A Statistical Study of a New Type Examination Question." By Grace Holmes and Edna Heidvreder. *Journal of Educational Research,* November, 1931. An investigation was made to determine the reliability and validity of a type of examination question known as the "Wrong-Word" question, in which the subject is required to pick out the one word that makes the sentence wrong. There are thirty-four such questions included in the final examination of the course in psychology at the University of Minnesota. An analysis of the results indicates that the scores on these items conform closely to the normal frequency curve and prove to be of proper difficulty. The wrong-word items showed a consistent decrease in the mean scores of A, B, C, D, and F students. The validity scores between wrong-word scores and criteria were also found to be very high.

OUR OWN WHO'S WHO

Hanna Astrup Larsen is literary secretary of the American-Scandinavian Foundation in New York, and editor of the *American-Scandinavian Review,* a monthly magazine devoted to the presentation of Scandinavian life and culture to American readers. Miss Larsen has for many years served as an interpreter of Scandinavian life to Americans and today has charge of all the publishing activities of the Foundation.

Joseph Villiers Denney is professor of English at Ohio State University. He was associated with the late Fred Newton Scott first at the University of Michigan and later as co-author of the well-known series of English textbooks. Mr. Denney has occupied such professional positions

as secretary of the North Central Association and president of the American Association of University Professors. He has edited several of the English classics and contributed to numerous educational journals. His latest publication is *Our English.*

Roy Ivan Johnson (Ph.D. University of Chicago) of the St. Louis public schools first advanced his much discussed method of determining functional centers as a basis for curriculum construction in English composition in his monograph, *English Expression.* He is author of a number of studies in English composition, among which are "The Persistency of Error in Composition" and "The Determination of Standards in Composition," and co-author of *Practical Studies in Composition* and *Study and Appreciation of the Short Story.* Dr. Johnson has been for successive years a member of the summer faculty of the School of Education of the University of Chicago.

Dora V. Smith (Ph.D. University of Minnesota) is in charge of the training of teachers of English, both undergraduate and in service, at the University of Minnesota, consulting specialist in English to the National Survey of Secondary Education, and chairman of the committee preparing the new Minnesota state course of study in English for secondary schools. Dr. Smith is co-author (with E. H. Webster) of the well-known *Teaching English in the Junior High School* and (with M. E. Haggerty) of *Reading and Literature,* Book III. A recent book, *Class-Size in High School English,* has aroused widespread interest among teachers of English.

Merrill Bishop is assistant director of English in San Antonio, Texas, and summer lecturer at Arkansas University in the field of the teaching of secondary English. He has written for *School Executives' Magazine, School Survey,* and the *Junior-Senior High School Clearing House.*

Helene Willey Hartley (Ph.D. Columbia University) is associate professor of education in Syracuse University. Her major attention has been given to the curriculum in English. She is the author of *Tests in the Interpretative Reading of Poetry.*

Agnes Slemons (B.S., A.M. University of Missouri) is assistant professor of English in Northeast Missouri State Teachers College at Kirksville. For many years she has taught English in secondary schools in Missouri and in Indiana.

Liesette J. McHarry (A.B., M.A. University of Illinois) has been for many years a member of the faculty of the University High School of the University of Illinois. Miss McHarry has undertaken rather extensive experimentation on the subject of individual instruction in composition.

Teresa M. Stanton is teacher of mathematics in the Detroit Junior High School, Cleveland, Ohio. She has contributed to such periodicals as *Skyline, College Life, School Topics,* and the *English Journal.*

Edna Goeden (A.B., M.A. Marquette University) is a teacher of English and journalism in the Washington High School, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. As an undergraduate student she attained distinction in the writing of poetry.

COLLEGE EDITION

Ezra Pound writes from his residence in Rapall (Via Marsala), Italy. He has been interesting himself in the "small" literary magazines both as contributor and as discriminating observer.

Warner Taylor is professor of English and chairman of Freshman English at the University of Wisconsin. His publications in the field of college English include *Freshman Themes, Representative English Essays,* and *Essays of the Past and Present.*

J. Homer Caskey, associate professor of English at Ohio University, has contributed articles and reviews to numerous scholarly journals. Either as a student or teacher he has made contacts with the libraries of Baylor University, Yale Graduate School, Exeter College, Oxford, Hillsdale College, the British Museum, the universities of Michigan, Illinois, and Iowa. His article in this issue of the *English Journal* on the college librarian effectively utilizes these contacts for professional purposes.

Frida R. Nilsen (B.A. St. Olaf College; M.S. University of North Dakota) is instructor in English at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota. For many years she taught in a Chinese school where Chinese was the medium of instruction.

Ledru O. Guthrie (A.B., A.M. University of Michigan) is instructor in English in the College of Engineering and Architecture at the University of Minnesota. He was formerly a student of electrical engineering and is co-author of the book, *Practical Forms in Exposition,* used in the Freshman engineering classes at the University of Minnesota.

BOOKS

JUNIOR ENGLISH[1]

Imagine a discussion by teachers of high-school and college composition on the following question: "What do we wish our grade-school pupils to know before they come to us?" I venture that the first essential agreed upon would be: "Let them know and use complete sentences." And the second? Perhaps there would be some disagreement there, but I hope that it might read: "Let their eyes be open, their ears alert to the sound of sentences, and their minds, swept clean of memorized, half-comprehended grammatical jargon, unprejudiced concerning that subject called English."

By those teachers who would fain make the scholastic world safe for complete sentences, the seventh-grade textbook, *Junior Highway to English* will be enthusiastically welcomed. The lessons, clear-cut, vigorously presented, carefully graded, all lead to one objective: the recognition and writing of complete sentences. Although there is much repetition, the work contains no mere busy-work, for each exercise is obviously directed toward the main purpose—inculcating "sentence sense." Here grammar, minus definition and reduced to a minimum, is no longer made an exercise in memory but becomes an exercise in thinking. The authors, to be sure, added a "Grammatical Appendix," in which formal grammar is briefly outlined. (Were the publishers responsible for its addition, or was the appendix a polite means of educating the teacher?)

Those familiar with Mr. Ward's numerous texts will note here the same concentration upon *form* and comparative disregard of thought and of theme organization that mark his other books. "We cannot accomplish all things at once," the authors seem to say. "Here let us be content if we fix a few of the skills necessary to literate writing." And one must admit that this concentration gives point and unity to the year's work.

Aside from instruction in sentence-building, the text includes lessons in oral composition, letter-writing, dictionary drill, spelling, and oral training in verb forms. The dictionary drills are well planned, well spaced, and wisely repetitious. The oral work, with its constant emphasis upon the sound of sentences, provides an admirable foundation for future ear-training. The weakest part of this otherwise admirable drill book is the treat-

[1] *The Junior Highway to English*. Revised. By C. H. Ward and H. V. Moffett. Chicago: Scott, Foresman.

ment of spelling. The authors, ignoring the psychological studies of the past ten years, still resort to visual tricks and ingenious combinations of words. Perhaps the wise teacher would supplement this book with a *Horn-Ashbaugh Speller* and, thus fortified, use this text, first, to open her pupils' ears to the sound of complete sentences; secondly, to teach purely functional grammar leading to the recognition of complete sentences; and, thirdly, to secure from every pupil the knowledge and use of complete sentences.

And when the seventh-grade teacher accomplishes these three objectives, so carefully stressed by Messrs. Ward and Moffett, the high-school and college teachers of English will know that the millennium has arrived.

LUCIA B. MIRRIELEES

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

A LIVE MANUAL FOR FRESHMAN ENGLISH

A detailed survey of the multiple-choice contents of the *Manual for Freshman English*[1] is impossible in this space. Even a mere glance is invigorating, however.

Certainly any Freshman should consider himself fortunate to associate with such a book. Its aim, as shown again and again, is a progressive thing, working from the present location of the student to a higher, more refined English composition, oral and written. And the urge is not in dogmatic rules and assertions, but rather in common-sense appeals and sane reasoning. A clear and understandable distinction among the various types of speech is made, and the uses of the various legitimate ones are offered for the consideration of the student-writer. Following a brilliant discussion of oral and written speech levels, the author points out:

> Much writing should suggest the style of conversational speech. The tone should vary with the circumstances. . . . . Good English does not mean stiff or colorless English, but effective and socially appropriate English [p. 9].
>
> . . . . When slang is socially acceptable, and is satisfactorily expressive, it is used by intelligent and well-bred persons [p. 11].

Students can understand and appreciate such an approach! In an earlier section another bid for attention comes in:

> It is not to be expected that a Freshman English course will graduate you as a professional writer [p. xi].
>
> . . . . If you are a student of "C" ability in English, you need not reproach

[1] *A Manual for Freshman English.* By George Summey, Jr. College Station, Texas: English Publishing Co.

yourself for failing to turn out "A" work; but if your papers are below your level of ability, you have no right to be satisfied with them [p. xii].

. . . . The student who honestly tries to say something worth while to a particular group of readers, for a clearly conceived purpose, and in such a way as to accomplish that purpose, need not be dull [p. 3].

If he [a student] is spiritually and mentally alive now, he knows or can learn enough material for sound writing [p. 7].

The old-timers, unity and emphasis, are made simple and worth while. Unity is that which "requires that the writer have a clearly conceived purpose, and fit the composition to that purpose in content, design and detail [p. 11]." Emphasis is something that "requires that significant matters stand out and incidental details keep the background [p. 14]."

Progress plans (referred to earlier) can be fully understood only by following through the various chapters, which provide for a gradation of quality extending from the acceptably colloquial to the formal and literary.

The chapter on spelling is not cluttered with a mass of rules useful chiefly in their exceptions. Instead, "Since good spelling is largely a matter of *visual memory,* one must cultivate the habit of observing and remembering the way words look, and of verifying the spelling of those that do not look right," is the forthright suggestion given (p. 228).

The chief disappointments in the book are two: In the face of so much liberal stimulation, why insert the rather dogmatic section on the use and development of the paragraph, especially the topic sentence, and the grammar-old developmental methods? One could also wish that the section on public speaking had been omitted, both because of course limitations and because of the limitations of the section itself—note the too frequent reference to other texts. Such material becomes dead wood in most colleges where courses in speech are offered.

FRED R. CONKLING

MANCHESTER COLLEGE
NORTH MANCHESTER, INDIANA

IN BRIEF REVIEW

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

FOR THE GENERAL READER

The Voyageur. By Grace Lee Nute. Appleton.

The French-Canadian canoemen of the early traders, remarkably strong and enduring, physically brave to rashness, gay in temper, simple-minded, greatly resembled salt-water sailors. Their red caps against the blue of the lakes or the green of the

fringing forest and their lilting chansons ringing over the water brighten the pages of early Canadian and Great Lakes history. Searching the old records, Miss Nute has produced a circumstantial account of them.

Loquacities. C. M. Flandrau. Appleton.

Whether the subject be Roosevelt's hat, old letters, the colt, the decline of the hoop skirt, or the *guigonol* in Paris, Flandrau writes with wit, sympathetic imagination, and artistic form.

These Restless Heads. By Branch Cabell. McBride.

Though James Branch Cabell, author, is no more, Branch Cabell, fifty-year-old class-conscious patrician, sits in his Virginia study and writes a "frame-of-mind" story with all of the rhetorical excellences of the gifted J. B. Cabell style, telling us about himself and his decorous adventures real and longed for. Comparing his experiences, his ideals, and his ambitions with those of fine, strong men and women, one wonders whether Cabell ever lived.

Stepping Westward. By Laura E. Richards. D. Appleton.

As a daughter of Julia Ward Howe, Mrs. Richards was born to culture, love of the fine things of life, a tradition of service, and high ideals. She had a delightful childhood, a happy marriage, six children, choice friends, and a long career as a writer and leader in social service. This rich and gracious life she has recorded with simple clarity in her autobiography.

The Best British Short Stories of 1931. Edited by Edward J. O'Brien. Dodd, Mead.

It is interesting to compare these twenty-six stories chosen from magazines of the year with the "Best" of a few years ago. There is still humor, but it is more subtle and never side-splitting. O'Brien's test of a story seems to be whether in the characters he finds essential human qualities and actions, woven with artistic skill into a pattern of distinction.

The Lady of Godey's. By Ruth E. Finley. Lippincott.

The Lady Editor was "first in" or "responsible for" so many things that her biography might be ponderous but for her own cleverness and that of R. E. Finley. Whether writing "Mary Had a Little Lamb," making Thanksgiving a national holiday, or scheming for women's rights, Mrs. Hale never forgot that her generation demanded "ladies," and she was too keen a fighter not to *seemingly* conform. Her triumphs justified her methods. More than thirty illustrations, chiefly from *Godey's Lady Book*, nine of them color plates, aid the reader's imagination.

The Saginaw and Paul Bunyan. By James Stevens. Knopf.

In the epic days when Paul Bunyan first moved from Quebec into Michigan, the Saginaw country was entirely surrounded by the great Round River. Straightening the corkscrew Big Auger River, swimming three days and nights across Round River with the great serpentine pack sled in tow, logging the trotting pines, outwitting the mud rain with semi-tamed whales, Paul does more wonderful, if not vaster, feats than in the Pacific Coast stories. As in his earlier book, Stevens, who has been an actual "bunkhouse bard," has "kept the pious purpose and followed the sacred method of the old camp bard in this work, never repeating another's tale, but yielding entirely

to inspiration." The product may be doubtful as folk lore but is authentic as literature.

The Golden Thread. By Philo M. Buck, Jr. Macmillan.

The "Golden Thread" is the literary tradition which finds a revelation of the racial experience in the imagination of poets and adventurers. These essays on the Greek epic, the Greek drama, the Latin and the Hebrew literatures, Dante, Cervantes, Montaigne, Shakespeare, Molière, and Goethe, are written in elaboration of this general theme.

The Book of Living Verse. Edited by Louis Untermeyer. Harcourt, Brace.

Mr. Untermeyer has sought to do what Palgrave did in the *Golden Treasury* and Quiller-Couch in the *Oxford Book of English Verse.* The selections, ranging from the thirteenth to the twentieth century, are obviously intended for readers whose acquaintance with English and American poetry is limited. Selections from earlier verse reflect modern taste in poetry, and the section on twentieth-century poems embraces writers widely diverse in method and outlook. An important collection by a distinguished anthologist.

American Writers on American Literature. Edited by John Macy. Horace Liveright.

Thirty-seven distinguished contemporary authors critically evaluate the main currents of American literature from Colonial times to the present. The contributors to this important collection of critical essays are a heterogeneous group comprising professional literary critics, college professors, poets, philosophers, historians, novelists—all of whom discourse on writers of special interest to them. All of the chapters are informative and stimulating, but of special interest are Van Doren's account of Thomas Paine, Markham's of Poe, Oppenheim's of Whitman, and T. V. Smith's survey of modern American philosophers.

Over Famous Thresholds. By Ariadne Gilbert. Century.

Popular and somewhat sentimentalized biographical sketches of Jenny Lind, Charlotte Brönte, George Eliot, Mark Twain, Theodore Roosevelt, James Barrie, and other well-known figures of literary and national interest.

Seven Contemporary Plays. Selected and edited by Charles H. Whitman. Houghton Mifflin.

The seven plays in this well-edited collection are Ibsen's *Enemy of the People,* Hauptmann's *The Sunken Bell,* Tchekov's *The Cherry Orchard,* Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac,* Galsworthy's *Strife,* Synge's *Riders to the Sea,* and O'Neill's *Beyond the Horizon.*

The Left Bank. By Elmer Rice. French.

A play peopled with young American sophisticates who are voluntarily expatriates in Paris. Both the characterization and the narrative are convincing. The dramatist argues that the weaknesses of American life which drive some of our intelligentsia abroad are found in equal measure elsewhere.

Counsellor-at-Law. By Elmer Rice. French.

Rapid narrative, sympathetic characterization, excellent dialogue—in short, good theater—make this a remarkably fascinating play. It is lacking, however, both in penetration and social motive.

Stout Cortez. By Henry Morton Robinson. Century.

Horror stories from the Spanish conquest of Mexico. This naïve reportorial study of the Spanish invader's character reveals an astonishing combination of courage and cruelty. Certain scenes from the book are unforgettable, notably that in which Cortez fixes the cross upon the ruins of a town he has devastated.

Creative Criticism and Other Essays. By J. E. Spingarn. Harcourt, Brace.

Contains a new printing of the earlier Spingarn essays on criticism which aroused so much controversy, and a collection of essays printed more recently in various periodicals and symposiums. The famous "Note on the New Humanism" appears with three other of the older essays in the Appendix. The more recent titles are: "The Younger Generation: A New Manifesto," "The American Critic," "The American Scholar," and "The Growth of a Literary Myth" (denying the "Croce-Spingarn-Carlyle-Goethe theory" of the drama).

The Theatre from Athens to Broadway. By Thomas Wood Stevens. Appleton.

The history of the drama is here portrayed as a continuous rhythm in which creative periods alternate with interpretative periods. Mr. Stevens traces the origins of the theater to the dramatic elements of the primitive snake dance, the chanting of the priests, and the songs of the folk festivals. The account is begun in a study of ancient drama and continues through its varying phases in European countries to a consideration of Ibsen and the stagecraft of our own day.

Christopher Columbus and Other Patriotic Verse. By Franklin P. Adams. Viking.

"Mine-run" "colyumist" verse by the dean of the profession, ranging from carefully wrought odes after Horace through parodies and stinging satires to the mere limping space-filling talk about the difficulty of grinding out copy. Some of the rhymed criticism might be used to wake up blasé high-school youth.

Strange Splendor. By Ernest Hartsock. Bozart Press.

Yearning for the fullness of life flows through this quick volume of posthumous verse, shaped for appreciation and protest. Ernest Hartsock found beauty and meaning alike in "parson crow," a chipmunk's antics, a Georgia campmeeting, the purposeful swarming of an ant hill, and the major passions of men. In that lies his breadth and universality. His "Sonnet to a Silver Dollar," discovered in a nest of stars a lady's face--Circe—still at her ancient trick of turning men to swine; and his "Armistice Day, 1928" is a cry against the martial crucifixion of recurring Armistice celebrations. He could watch the missionary's eagerness to convert the heathen mandarin to a more intolerant creed, protest a world where foolish virgins are tricked into rejection of "the lyric consolation of the flesh," and yet not find life bitter nor death good.

Sigrid Undset. By Victor Vinde. University of Washington Book Store.

A biographical essay of the author of *Kristin Lavransdetter* and the *Master of Hestviken.* In the development of her art a place is given to the novelist's point of view, technique, and significance.

The New Regionalism. By Carey McWilliams. University of Washington Book Store.

A clear summary of regionalism as the most vital aspect of literature in American life today. The essay is not alone an exposition or a plea for emphasis on the characteristic life, manners, and dialect exhibited by specific localities but presents the attacks on it and draws lines of demarcation among regional schools.

Atala. By F. A. Chateaubriand. Translated from French by Caleb Bingham. Edited by William Leonard Schwartz. Stanford University Press.

A delightful, simple, version of this famous classic story of the love and constancy of Atala and Chactas, two children of nature. A charming example of the adoration of the primitive so common in the eighteenth century.

FOR THE TEACHER

The Way Out of Educational Confusion. The Inglis Lecture, 1931. By John Dewey. Harvard University Press.

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Lives in the Making. By Henry Neumann. Appleton.

Analysis of the problems of character education from the psychological, sociological, and religious standpoints. The procedures advocated are, in general, sound. The chapter on moral instruction in literature is especially stimulating.

The Integration of Teaching. By Samuel Quigley. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Edwards Bros.

A methods textbook for student teachers and teachers in training "from the kindergarten to the senior college," in litho-print. The discussions are based upon the assumptions inherent in the Morrisonian technique.

The Nature and Treatment of Stammering. By E. J. Boome and M. A. Richardson. Dutton.

This excellent discussion of a highly important problem is based upon the personal experience of ten years of research by these British experts. The authors emphasize the importance of complete investigation of physical, psychological, and environmental factors in each individual case. They advocate the application of principles of

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Standard Catalog for Public Libraries. Literature and Philology Section. Compiled by Minnie Earl Sears. H. W. Wilson.

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Essays of Today. By Rose Adelaide Witham. Houghton Mifflin.

An extraordinarily useful manual for the study of the essay in the high-school literature class. Most of the essays are grouped as informal journalistic essays, personal tributes, descriptive essays, reminiscences, controversial essays, and essays on books and well-known contemporary writers of prose. Diagrammatic summaries of the history of the English and American essay are given at the beginning of the book, along with a very readable essay on literary form.

Practical English Drill Book. By Easley S. Jones. Century.

This exercise book in spelling, punctuation, grammar, sentence structure, and the structure of the whole composition consists of a preliminary test in composition, several pages of reference material, and forty-nine exercises, all of which call for very brief responses. The manual is provided with a reference section inside the front cover and a chart of assignments inside the back cover.

New Copy, 1931. Selected by Donald Leman Clark, Dorothy Brewster, *et al.* Introduction by Helen Hull. Columbia University Press.

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